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A
Voice
from
the
Trees

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Frontispiece *Sunrise*

A Voice from the Trees

And Other Poems

By

Charles Herbert Frogley

(1876–1914)

With an Introduction by

Philip H. Wicksteed, M.A., Litt.D.

And Two Photographs by the Author

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Introduction

CHARLES HERBERT FROGLEY (born June 20th, 1876, died April 17th, 1914) left a number of poems behind him, some printed and others in various stages of completeness, typed or in manuscript. He wrote out of "the feeling of having more enjoyment in beauty than one knows how to contain." Life itself was to him "so truly and absolutely a joy and a delight" that the drab monotony of the lives that most of us live seemed nothing short of tragic. Hence he was impelled to arrest his "moments of intense inward delight" by attempting a "record of beauty in terms of beauty," and was inspired by the hope that in so doing he might open up to one or another the deeper sources of joy at which he himself drank. As to the value of his work he had many doubts. He more than suspected that "there is placed in the mind of all utterers an exaggerated idea of the importance of their message, to ensure its being uttered at all, on the same principle as that of the multiplication of seed to ensure the survival of the species." But he never for a moment doubted the validity of his own sense for "every sunrise and sunset, every cloud in the sky, every product and habit of nature" as a direct access to that real life which is in itself absolute bliss; and he could not relinquish the hope that, since he loved these things so deeply, he might be able to "sing them into recognition" as he believed that an artist friend (from his correspondence

with whom most of the extracts in this prefatory note are taken) had already been able to "limn them so that folk *must* look and admire."

Frogley's verse, whatever may be thought of it, was at any rate the direct product of his experience. Literary influences or suggestions had hardly so much as a secondary share in the impulse that drove him to write; and literary ambition was altogether foreign to his nature. Indeed his reading had never leant to the poetic or purely literary side. Science (he was fond of his telescope), philosophy and sociology attracted him more; and his speculations often haunted the region of "border land" psychology. His favourite art was music, for which he had an ear, untrained technically, but of extraordinary analytical power and delicacy. Painting too moved him deeply. But the only poet who had seriously impressed him was Walt Whitman; and though few men were better qualified to understand and enjoy Wordsworth, Frogley had practically no acquaintance with his work until (after he had printed his longest poem) one friend after another spoke to him of the close kinship between his own sense for nature and Wordsworth's. Then he opened the treasure-house and appreciated the treasure to the full.

No doubt the fact that he drew nearly all his poetry direct from nature and not from the poets is connected with a certain contempt for literary form which his correspondence here and there betrays, and which is to be traced clearly enough in unevenness, lapses, and

occasional flagging, even in some of his best work. But it is hardly possible to regret it, for it shows us the rare spectacle of a genuine poet, not captured by the inherent charm of the music and rhythm of language on its own account, but *discovering* its capacities under pressure of the imperative demand for an instrument of utterance.

Indeed as a rule it was only under the direct and immediate impact of nature that Frogley could write. Nearly everything that he cared to preserve was written out of doors. Hence he read chiefly in the winter and wrote in the summer half of the year; and he played with his camera as a means of preserving his impressions for the eye almost as affectionately as he did with the graving tool of verse that registered them on his mind. Two reproductions of his "tree" work are introduced into this volume.

It is probably an effect of this dependence upon immediate out-door contacts, coupled with the fact that Frogley was never physically robust, rather than any lack of sympathy with the wilder and more boisterous aspects of nature that limits the range of his nature poems. Speaking of writing in the open air, in a letter dated in the middle of March, he says: "Of course it isn't possible yet, least of all in boisterous March; not but that the face of dear Nature is inspiring enough if one's body would put up with the temperature conditions."

But nature is not the only subject of his verse. The "pressing need of sharing one's overflowing delight," which he regarded as the normal and primary source of

all poetic utterance, was characteristic of him in every aspect of his life. And hence, inevitably, his mind passed from the enjoyment of nature and such kindly offices as the village life invited (his evenings were generally spent in the village reading-room which he had established, and he was the universal children's friend) to the consideration of social problems. "Sometimes I find myself wondering," he writes to his friend, after speaking of his beloved trees, "if these silent friends will by their influence lead you, as they led me, away onward from themselves to men and women and social tangles. I cannot but believe that they will, while retaining their own appeal." And again, "To me every additional acquisition, comfort or pleasure seems a reminder that things are not as they should be." But the protest that was seething in his veins had scarcely become articulate. He hated commercialism, he hated class privilege, he hated war, and he believed that they all hung together. But so far from professing socialism he appears to have felt as much intellectual dissatisfaction with any theories he had met under that name as moral indignation against the evils which they assailed. Several of the poems to be found towards the end of this volume reflect this sense of social misery and wrong, and the author's attempt to find the terms of reconciliation or relation between his perception of the inherent beauty of life and the pressure of its cruel conditions. That he had not yet come to any clarity on these matters he was himself fully aware, and as his principal direct effort to express

himself about them (the latter part of the poem entitled "War") was very far from satisfying him it has not been included in this volume.

He did not live to see the war that is now desolating Europe. But during the Balkan war he wrote: "The autumn colourings are grand around here. It is hard to drag oneself indoors for meals, leaving such feasts and banquets outside. I was quite carried away by the beauty of it all to-day; telling myself that here indeed was Heaven, even to the degree of the sublime imagination of the Prophet, for did I not walk upon emerald ways and were not the trees of gold and ruby, and did not God 'shine in heaven as the sun,' and for choir did not the heart sing wild rhapsodies of delight? All these thoughts came rushing in to confirm the present and perfect realisation of the Prophet's vision of the new City of God, till I remembered how not many hundred miles away men were thirsting for each other's blood and rushing at each other's throats, whilst they who could prevent such horrors stood idly watching, afraid of their own rapacity, afraid to interfere lest among themselves popular passions should embroil half the world in the flames of war."

Little remains to be said. "A Voice from the Trees," in many respects Frogley's most characteristic poem, reveals clearly enough both his alienation from all established ecclesiasticisms and his profound devoutness of heart. Trees, stars and children (together with music and painting) were sacrament and ritual to him.

But it is interesting to find in one of his latest letters a record of the deep impression produced upon his mind by a casual visit to Romsey Abbey, where he took refuge from a storm. He had not been inside a church for eight years, he says. His own temple must always be the open sky or the vault of the trees. But he will henceforth seek a more sympathetic attitude of mind towards those who find in some august work of man the most moving invitation to prayer. A poem, too incomplete for inclusion here, renders an earnest tribute to an aged clerical friend recently deceased, in which he owns that that friend has stood to one soul, sick with hollow manifestations of faith, for the lustre of its inward truth; and, maybe, to have done so, he says, is one added gem in his crown.

In selecting and arranging the poems for publication, the editor has respected a few departures from metrical rule or convention, which he had reason to believe were deliberate. But where, either in printed or manuscript poems, there seemed to be obvious oversights that admitted of easy rectification he has endeavoured to correct them. The instances are very few in which such liberties have been taken, and only once has the omission of a part of a poem necessitated a verbal alteration in the portion printed. The author's own alterations of printed poems have in every case been adopted.

PHILIP H. WICKSTEED

CHILDREY
May 15th, 1915

A Voice from the Trees

A Voice from the Trees
And other poems

Apology

THERE came a thought which asked me how I dared
To speak for Truth; how I, who oft had fared
Away from Truth's high call, could scorn the life
Of mere utility, and join the strife
Of facts, within the open field of thought.
For such an one life's ends were fitter sought
In humbler ways; 'twere more consistent aim
On some immediate good to lay my claim;
I had small right to leave the lowlier call,
That weds man to the mart, and doth instal
Its own high code of laws and worthy ends—
That well employs man's restless mind, and bends
Beneath the ordered course and trend of things
To serve the Scheme full well as he who sings.
Why fret my mind with tasks, which but involve
The press of problems past my power to solve?
I was amazed, and for a time—ashamed;
I groped for answer, and my lips I framed
For some excuse; then finding naught to say
To such a well-earned charge, I turned away.
And as I turned, an answer came indeed—
Surging within, and fashioned to my need.

For turning, gently met my hungering gaze
A sun-enraptured valley, pearled in haze,
Where trees and happy meadows laughed and sang
In shimmering radiance; wafted whence there sprang,
To still my trembling lips, the soft caress
Of honey-nectared breeze, whose sweet impress
Silenced a half-born sob and choking sigh
For what had seemed a life's futility.
The trees with love seemed quivering,—as the air
With song of bird, and sight,—with beauty rare
Beyond all power to sense, much less to voice.
The path I tread is scarcely one of choice.
A power has given me eyes impelled to see
Its Beauty everywhere, in flower and tree,
In cloud and shine, in form and sound and sense;
The whole creation throbs with joys intense
For me. How can I stay the raptured song
That will not be denied—the press and throng
Of utterances of love, whereby I gain
Expression of the thought that it were pain
To hold unuttered? Yet I ne'er can rest
Content with shows, I straightway must invest
With that I see, some fact which glows behind
The outward form. Tho' sight and sound combin'd
Can please the mind awhile, I soon do tire
Of these for their own sake; for I aspire
To recognise in shows their several facts,
Relate them in their source, where each reacts
On each, engendering so a fact beyond,
Which outward sight, unaided, ne'er had conn'd.
In this resolve, I spend my life in thought,
Apart from men I seek to serve. I've caught
From this employment all the joy the years,

So far, have yielded me. 'Tis this that cheers
My flagging spirit onward, maugre doubt,
The wage of meaner hour; all which I scout
Upon the grounds that joy would surely crown
No work of mine, unless that work were grown
From out my very nature. Hence I plod
Patiently onward; and it may be, God,
Who works thro' mind of man, and every hap
Doth turn to serve His ends, will somehow wrap
Within my songs a germ of use and worth,
Which shall expand and justify their birth.

"The Morning's Cup"

HOLD to the morn as sacred; 'tis a time
When unto all things comes a sweet rebirth,
Attainéd without travailing or pain.
When naked from Eternity's deep womb
The pristine life emerges and enjoys
The paradise of childhood. 'Tis the hour
When courted joys stand forth in true appraisement
And to the soul reborn come welling up
Sweet intimations from its native clime;
And filled at secret springs the potent cup
Of holy inspiration is held forth
For all pure souls to drink in sacrament.
Anew each morn God walks His garden world;
And paints afresh the flowers and tunes the lark,
Feedeth the worm and spreads on all His dew;
To sign His Universal Charity.

Desire

I AM athirst, O Living Stream, rise up
Within my soul and fill the waiting cup
That here I proffer in this heart of mine,
And stay its aching with a draught divine;
Pour in the rose-red wine of love and brim
Its hollow circlet to the utmost rim;
Then catch me up in Thy divine embrace
And in the heavenly sunbeams bathe my face.
Upon my brow imprint the kiss that fills
My every sense with sweetest rapture-thrills
And piercing through the senses' utmost bound,
Breaks forth in splendour on the world around,
And tunes the heart to song thro' joy that sees
Thy glory bursting thro' the fields and trees;
For oh, indeed, I cannot, cannot rest
Shrunken in soul and empty of the zest
That builds up heaven from an earthly state,
And every thought and act doth consecrate.
O plunge me in Thy love's refining fire,
And pluck me forth a brand of pure desire,
Single and constant, passionate and strong
To burn all feeling in the flame of song,
And fire the heart with a far subtler power
To forge new feeling for each songful hour.
Then press, oh press me to Thy glowing breast
And fill me full of Thy divine unrest,
Yea, fill me full of a sublime endeavour
To press to Thee for ever and for ever.

Strength

BE strong! Build up your soul
To serve itself and be its own delight;
To rear its own fair children to console
With discourse sweet, in solitude's despite.

Lest like some schooner shorn
By sudden squall of rudder or of sail,
Thou should'st lie drifting, helpless and forlorn,
With naught to fill the hour or fly the gale.

Yet do not shun the press,
Finding with men no niche to fit thy whim:
Make not an idol of thy loneliness,
But serve thy friend whilst in the way with him.

And still be sure of this,
Thou art a whole; within thyself abides
A universe complete with every bliss,
And bosom'd deep in Heaven's eternal tides.

The Stars

We are one with the stars.—MEREDITH.
Love lights the star.—ROSSETTI.

BE strong! Be great! Yet lest thou think thy might
In aught but seeming wholly is thine own,
Or that thou art, save in the infinite sown,
Go, scan the heavens some still and starry night,
And feast thy reverence on the wondrous sight!
What part was thine, when forth the spheres were thrown,
And tuned to song the fire-bespangled zone?
Helped *thy* thought build these glittering orbs of light?
Engulfed in space to depths no thought can span,
These gemmed galáxies type and measure man.
With every need endowed from pole to pole
Each unit limns the likeness of the Whole.
Each, seeming perfect and self-caused to shine,
Is poised and piloted by Love Divine.

The Morning Star

I WOKE this morn as the first pulse of hope
Came trembling upward o'er the eastern slope;
And morning, treading on the heels of night,
Faint-tinged her dusky robe with flecks of light.
I woke; and yet had not the doorway past
That now wide opes the sense, now shuts it fast,
Till memory found me on the threshold's brink
And gave the thrust that woke me wide, to think
Of that pure beam of joy, misnamed a star,
That late lay anchored at the sunset's bar,
But now had crossed the flaming boundary line
And might perchance be in the east ashine.
Straight from the thought I left my couch and flung
The window wide and instantly was wrung
With an o'erwhelming surge of speechless awe,
Wrought by the majesty of what I saw;
For there athwart the mid south-east was spread,
Pendent in heaven, like jewels on a thread,
Orion's matchless galaxy of light,
A radiant necklace on the breast of night,
Each gem aflame and with a gentle motion
Seeming to rise and fall on love's vast ocean.
Spellbound I stood and felt my soul dilate
To bounds that paused but at the day's closed gate;
Then as I to that roseate portal drew,
Behold I sank beneath joy's flail anew;
As softly from its bed of chaste repose,

Love's own sweet star in blushing splendour rose,
And mounted slowly in her soaring car
To rule the dawn and reign as morning star.
And as I watched, my soul spread forth her wings
And burst the veil that screens the heart of things;
Till soaring through the star's soft rosy light,
I saw the world, with backward bending sight,
Not as it is but as it shall be viewed
When it shall be with love's own soul imbued.
I cannot tell. No power was given me then
That might bring back the vision unto men;
Joy's very self blurred with excess of joy
The eager powers this service would employ;
Speech has no trap to catch with bait of sound
The glorious light that lapped the world around,
Nor could my eyes long bear the focussed rays
That distance blent into one tremulous blaze,
But fell as falls the glance of him who tries
To front the mastering glance of stronger eyes.
Then as my gaze fell from the glorious star,
Behold day's door stood tremblingly ajar;
And like the dreams whence late I did awake,
So paled the vision at the glad day's break.
Yet much it pained me as that tender ray
So swiftly fainted in the light of day,
To think how love, mid stress of social strife,
Decks but the early morn of human life
Only too often, and how pale her beam
Beneath the glare of warring wants doth seem.
Would that indeed it were our constant mood,
That for dead weakling talk of brotherhood,
We might smite down the curséd social weed
That battens on each man's essential need;

So that sweet love might from her throne come down
And in men's hearts accede unto her own.
But now each morn cold commerce takes the knife
And severs heart from heart and love from life.

The Message

THIS morn, as rose my soul from out the deep
And earthward swept to break the bands of sleep,
Methought one sense awoke a span too soon
Or that some deeper sense forgot to swoon;
And thus, it seemed to me, my wakeful mind
Faint-glimpsed the life that waking leaves behind.
Be how it may, interpret as thou wilt,
As some new wine of truth o'er darkness spilt
Or as some chance coincident accord
Of dream with sanity and pregnant word—
From deepest sleep I suddenly awoke
To instant wareness of a voice that broke
Like distant waters falling from a height,
Heard in the calm solemnity of night.
A voice of veiléd majesty, whose tone
Seemed none the less, in some strange way, my own;
Authoritative, dreadful, reverent, high,
Myself, yet vaster than this personal "I"
Spoke forth a message, which no art of mine
Shall twist to fit the measure of my line.

* * * * *

Invocation

O, COME again, Thou Spirit of the light
That shines within; Thou Herald of that day
Whose dawn exceeds the sun's diurnal ray
As the high noon excels the deeps of night.
Surge up within, Thou Flame of pure delight
And fire my soul to utterance; let my lay
Burn with the heavenly passion, whose full sway
Alone inspires and tunes the heart aright.
O, come again and to my thirsting lips
Hold Thou the one true nectar; let me drink
Deep of the heavenly wisdom; lift me up,
Nor let me leave a drop within the cup
Nor stay my hold upon the chalice brink
Till I am steeped unto the finger tips.

The Thrush

HARK to the sound that bids the spirit wake
New lively hopes for those late hid beneath
The old year's shroud, and for its withered wreath
Of joys foregone, new flowers of promise take.
Hark to it! Hark! Such melody must make
Even the very buds catch up their breath
And thrill with hope beneath their seeming death;
Whilst all enchanted seems the echoing brake.
Arise, sweet visions of all life renewed!
The glad fields starred with flowers from Spring's full lap,
The scents of moistened earth and rising sap,
And frail translucent leaves all morn-bedewed!
Sweet visions, rise, nor flee as I remember
The thrush I hear is singing in December.

To the Same

SWEET spirit to the daybreak singing,
Your whole soul into music flinging,
Whence comes that wild ecstatic rush
Sent out to greet the morn's first blush,
And whence that answering leap within
That sways me as your song melts in?
For there is something in your note

That springs in regions more remote
Than mere delight in sensuous things;
Not merely your soft utterings
The external sign of hopes astir
Already for the unborn year,
That brings again love's beaming tide,
The sweet companion at your side.
And that quick echo of delight,
That sudden burst of inner light,
That rift-like gleam of hidden bliss—
Of happier, fairer scenes than this,
That wakes within the listening mind
Is not the shallow fleeting kind
That finds full causal explanation
In a mere outward revelation;
It has its meanings deeper down
And is in life's essentials sown.
The thrill of joy you give and take,
The sudden sense of hope you wake
Refers us to a vaster spring
Than that of which men think you sing.
Hail to thee, heavenly singer, hail,
That bidst our brighter thoughts prevail!
Hail to your clear prophetic eye
That glimpses immortality.

The Aconite

SWEET flower, no longer be unsung—
Unhonoured of the poet's tongue,
Whilst all the later flowers of spring
Have made so many singers sing.
The snowdrop and the violet
Have oft in jewelled song been set,
Whilst thou hast scarcely found a place
In song, who art the first to trace
Thy cheery cypher in the soil,
Pure gold within an emerald foil.
Thou dost not wait until the sun,
His spendthrift southern roaming done,
A prodigal repentant turns
To lands where joy more lightly burns.
But ere the year's first youngling hour,
Whilst frosts are keen and skies are dour,
Dost thrust thy crown up through the earth
To prophesy the spring's rebirth;
And onward, springward, many a day,
Unnoticed art content to stay.
Surely, sweet blossom, thou must be
Close kindred to the thrush, for he
Is singing from the branch when thou
Art budding from the grass below.
Perchance, each floweret of your throng
Was once a note within his song,

That sinking to the ground raised up,
Like answering echoes, each pure cup.
For often I have thought his call
Far, far too sweet to fruitless fall;
Well may it even be that God
Sets forth thy token in the sod
To tell that sweet melodious bird
His morning song of praise is heard.

Invitation

THE blackbird now hath bathed his yellow feet
In the bright spangles of the dewy lawn,
And seeks a topmost branch whence he may greet
With songs of joy the coming of the dawn.

Come then, my soul, together let us sip
The morning's glory 'neath the misty trees,
Ere yet the diamond on the rose's lip
Melts in the sun or dies upon the breeze.

Come, let us at day's threshold stand and wait
The precious meed of inspiration's hour,
While yet thy ward is at the senses' gate,
Or yet the bloom is brushed from off the flower,

That springs each morn from out the soil of sleep,
The rose of life, faint seen thro' rift-like gleams
By the dull sense, as thou, my soul, dost sweep
Back from that land we call the land of dreams.

While yet the mind is kneeling to love's spell,
While yet the spirit craveth to be fed,
Come let us trace the mist-enchanted dell
And hear the lark's song, lost in light o'erhead.

Come let us through the sacrament of dawn
  Receive the wine that to a heedless world
Daily in love is offered and withdrawn
  Into Love's beaming bosom far infurled.

Come let us grasp the chalice, drain the cup,
  Drink in its rapture with a thirst of fire,
Till deep within its wealth is gathered up
  And satisfied is all the heart's desire.

Spring's Forenote

THE blackbird is greeting the morn with his song,
A theme from the lark he has taken;
He carols of spring that is speeding along
Dear Nature from dreams to awaken.

Too long she has slumbered and slept 'neath the shroud
That winter has woven around her;
Yet soon the deep laugh of her lord will ring loud,
When the sun in his love-quest has found her.

For lo! she already half wakes from her dream,
Where thought is with fantasy vieing,
As flashes athwart her the quickening beam
That fills e'en her slumber with sighing.

The laugh of the sun and the song of the bird
With the sighings of Nature do mingle;
And hearts are from lethargy quickened and stirred
With love and with joy all a-tingle.

So charms the sweet songster the dawn with his lay,
A rippling rondel of laughter.
He knows that the dawn is the herald of day;
Spring comes and the summer comes after.

The New Day

THERE is a spirit moving o'er the earth;
I feel it breathing in the barren lanes,
Riding the wind, and through its plaintive strains
Weaving a subtle thread of hope and mirth.
I see the promise of its beauteous worth
In every byway, where beneath the stains
Of withered leaves and splash of miry rains,
Bright spears and crowns of gold spring up to birth.
And hidden by the husks of faith's decay,
Of mental lumber and of sterile toil,
I see a vaster spirit thrust its ray
Up through the barren and reluctant soil:
May no late frosts of hate the hour oppose
That decks earth's desert with its promised rose.

March

NOW lusty March is here, and see! the elms
Are deck'd in filmy veils of russet red,
And life returns and song to earthly realms.

Now sweet buds shoot, and from their chilly bed,
Golden with hope, upshoot the daffodils,
For joy is come and winter's tears are shed.

The frosts have flown and freed the gurgling rills
To run a tinkling race towards the brooks,
And seaward glide between th' embosoming hills.

All Nature is astir, the busy rooks
Do scrape the air with unpretentious cry,
And violets ope their eyes in shelter'd nooks.

The clouds snow-bosom'd, racing o'er the sky
Call to the lark to leave the stable earth,
And flood the quivering air with melody.

Oh happy, hopeful time, when life's rebirth
Kisses the drooping earth to blushing joy
And changes all our grieving into mirth.

The East Wind

APRIL is come, yet o'er the cowering fields
The angry east with iron-shod heel doth rage;
High o'er his head a blinding sword he wields,
Laying to waste the Spring's fair heritage.

To all fair forms of beauty void of ruth,
Heedless of joy, exulting in each sigh,
He bans all song and with his iron tooth
Gnaws at the vitals of humanity.

His parching breath, piercing with dagger smart,
Blackens the grass and all the tender shoots;
And cramping agues shrivel up the heart,
And chill life's sap and blight its very roots.

The daffodils lie prone, their gentle breath
Has westward flown; the primrose, April's pride,
Pierced to the quick lies innocent in death,
And sorrow shrouds the woodland far and wide.

O Gentle Power! O Spring, beloved Spring!
Hasten thy footsteps, let the hungering sward
Laugh 'neath thy kiss so light yet lingering,
And ban chill winter with his icy sword.

Spring

OH tell me not this April morn
That life is built of pain,
For hearts with winter's blasts now torn
The spring shall bind again;
As summer's leaves and autumn's sheaves
Shall come life's joys amain.

The cloudy frowns the landscape wears
Shall yield to shimmering rays;
And lips now dumb with doubts and fears
Shall leap with joy and praise.
As keen and bright as rays of light
Come smiles of happier days.

Oh hark! the fields and woods among
And all the valleys through,
Spring trips her merry way along
Beflowering earth anew
Till life be drenched with sun and song
As the fields are drench'd with dew.

Spring's Return

NOW Spring returns o'er the southern hills,
And out from her lap a-laughing spills
The honied blossoms of sweet content,
With songs and cries of merriment.

She drives out the pains of the winter past,
As Easter expels the Lenten fast,
And in place of its greys she flings a stain
Of dainty green o'er the valleys again.

She trips o'er the meadows and under her feet
Spring daisies and cowslips and buttercups sweet.
She stoops to the brooks and ever there blows
The iris and primrose wherever she goes.

She kisses the trees and the cerements fall
That shielded the shoots from the wintry squall;
She woos and teases in merry strife,
Laughing their tender leaves to life.

O'erfreighted with guerdons of happy hours,
She fills the buds of the shrunken flowers
With the sweet surcharge of her joy's excess
Till they burst into bowers of loveliness.

The overflow of her heart's delight
Is the dew that begems the sward at night.
The toss of her head and its tumble of tresses
Is the scented rain that the young corn blesses.

She chastely singeth her song till June
Cometh and calls for a lustier tune;
And the kiss of farewell from her lips as she goes
Is the bloom of the cherry and blush of the rose.

The Nightingale

THE nightingale is awake,
Altho' the night
Enwraps the echoing brake
Away from sight,
My senses quiver and faint
With joy's sweet spell,
While his rapt passionate plaint
Floods all the dell.

Oh listen, my heart, and drink
Dry in the cup,
Nor stay thy lips at the brink
Of that sweet sup,
That leaps from love's lips and laves
The listening night
With ecstasy's sparkling waves
Of pure delight.

Oh read me, my soul, his song,
Which knows no stay;
And tell me why all night long
He sings of day.
Why leaves he never the dark
To love's sweet rest,
But sings on until the lark
Soars from his nest.

To a Rose

THOU marvel of a flower! To think
Thy blushing depths of rose and pink,
Thy melody of light and shade
A little rain and sunshine made.
Thou sweet and tender link
'Twixt evanescent things that pass
And That which passes not, Thou glass
Bright to reflect a boundless Love
That doth my soul to worship move,—
Thou art a rift—a chink
Thro' which I catch a glimpse of Heaven.
Thine is that Beauty which doth leaven,
Lump by lump, this world of ours,
The which, as thou 'neath sun and showers,
'Neath summer's glare and winter's chill,
'Neath solid good and seeming ill,
Shall grow until it flowers.

Sweet flower, thou art a prophecy
Of man, as God will have him be!
Thou art a living prayer!
Pray God for me,
That He will mould my life, till He
Shall see it daily grow more fair;
Pray that He make my soul to shine,
A creature radiant with His light,
As fair and lovely in His sight
As thou art, now, in mine.

On Finding Two Cowslips Blooming in August

WHY, what are these? I thought the Spring had flown,
Since lusty June and brawny-armed July
Have homeward gone and August's flowing robe
Drapes all the fields in waving folds of gold.
Yet here beneath the laden chestnut tree,
Pure as the first faint breath of dawn that stirs
The soul to worship, and far sweeter than
The choicest incense or the costliest nard,
Two cowslips tip their tiny vases up,
Full to the brim with Spring's rich loving-cup,
Cloying the air with scents ambrosial.
What do ye here, ye trumpeters of joy,
Ye heralds of the summer's pageant?
What do ye here when all your kin have flown,
Ye solitaries, in the year's decline?
Surely 'twas here that first the snowy tips
Of young Spring's feet surprised the sleeping sward,
And that full thrill that then the glad earth felt
With tingling nurture still doth fill your life.
Or was it else that here one lush May morn,
Two souls foredestined for each other's love
Mingled and plighted pure and faithful troth?
Or yet again, perchance, it was that here
Some poet treading on his own high thought,
Was caught ecstatic to the realm of song,
And sinking thence by sheer excess of gain,

Fell back like one a-swooning with the tones
That filled his soul and overflowed his lips,
And here the surplus that he could not hold
Or store in haste upon his tablets' page
Sank to the ground and flushed your rooty springs
So that ye too taste immortality.

A Harvest Evening

NOW sinks the weary lark from out the steep
And sings on earth his last few faltering trills;
Sweet odours rise and hues of evening creep
With velvet feet along the purpling hills.

Now the ripe laughter of the corn is hushed,
Stilled is the breeze that frolick'd with its gold;
And the wild poppy in the sheaf lies crushed;
The tale its beauty lived to tell is told.

Now leave the gleaner rooks the stubbly plain
And homeward fly towards the fading west;
Soft silence falls like comfort after pain
And woos the valley like a child to rest.

Now like an odour lingering ere it dies,
The last faint flush of opalescent light
Sinks in the west; day droops her drowsy eyes
And turns for sleep; one sigh—and it is night.

Autumn

NOW all the corn is reaped and stored;
The plough lays bare the mouse's hoard;
The wizard rooks with jaunty gait
Hard on the ploughman's footsteps wait.

Down in the valley's sheltering dip,
Where corn ricks jostle hip to hip,
The droning thresher's hungry maw
Chams out the grain from chaff and straw.

Nearby the steam's laborious growl
Mimics the winds that nightly howl
And choked by smoke and fiery force
Coughs like a broken-winded horse.

Old Time has stroked the year's full brow
And chilled the sweet sap's gentle flow,
His touch has blanched the lime with dread
And flushed the beech with hectic red.

Each sweet-breathed morn the eye doth reap
A feast of colour grown more deep,
Till day takes equal steps with night
And tempest blears the vision bright.

To the Swallows

NOT yet, frail sailors of billows,
White, purple and jet,
Sweet lovers of poplars and willows
Leave us not yet,
Nor sadden our hearts with your message
That summer has set.

Why crowd ye all there on the wires
Like pearls on a thread?
Are ye tired of our marshes and mires
That ye haste to be sped,
Taking to strangers the nurslings
Our summer has fed?

Is it a song ye are singing,
A song or a sigh,
Or naught but the cleave of your winging
I hear in the sky?
Or is it your daily good-morrow,
Oh sorrow, or is it good-bye?

The Swallows' Departure

BUT yesterday, because the wind blew cold
And dripping leaves were quivering on the tree,
And Autumn's spectre haunted all the wold,
Filling all feeling with its prophecy,

I saw them on the housetops press together
And fill my pear tree with their restless crowd,
Anon on wing to cleave the blustering weather
And flee in whirling masses 'fore the cloud.

And yet this morn, beneath a kindlier glow,
A backward glance of summer loth to leave,
I saw their bow and arrows heavenward go
And on the blue a mazy pattern weave;

So that I thought I had misread the sign
Their congregation gave me yesterday
And forthwith took poetic rod and line
Within thought's stream to angle for a lay,

In praise of summer thus in love returning
(For did not summer's bird still haunt the skies?)
Kissing the hills and o'er the valleys yearning
Ere from our shores reluctantly she flies.

But when I pricked the thought-bound sense of sight
And bade it lend a fulcrum to my wit,
Flinging it up to scan the swallows' flight,
Behold the skies were empty.—

For while I wrote the swallows had departed
Leaving a sense of sorrow on the breeze,
Leaving the fields and valleys wintry-hearted,
And with the summer crossed the southern seas.

October

OCTOBER wanes, and still the elms are green
With summer's lingering touch; well might it be
The month of June for all that can be seen
Of winter's blanching breath. No other tree
So stoutly bears the fierce assaults of cold;
They wear e'en yet the hue that decks the shows
Of summer's prime; no fleck of brown or gold
Betrays the year is hastening to its close.

November

NOW 'tis November, yet the sturdy elms
Cling to their robes of green; tho' winter's power
Is firmly camped within the very keep
Of vanquish'd summer, ruling o'er her realms,
And many a dingled nook and shady bower
Is tenantless, in leafy ruin deep.
The tender breath of sycamore and lime,
And beech, the queen of trees, is quench'd and still.
Of all the sun-born shapes that life immures,
The elm now stands alone and laughs at time.
Thus early pass the fair and lovely, while
The form of mass and ruggedness endures.

The Dying Year

THE trees are stark, the leaves are shed
And sere in suggy mire lie dead;
The blustering West with angry roar
Rattles and rankles at the door.

The shrunken sun winks o'er the hill;
The barren ways are cold and chill;
The tatter'd cloud yields up its load,
And streamlets gutter down the road.

True to the dawn's prophetic red
That warns the shepherd ris'n from bed,
The wind's wild clamour swells with day;
The fields are whipt with scudding spray.

The palsied forms of summer's thought
Up from their beds are reft distraught;
All mad with grief they scour the ground
And whirl in eddies round and round.

Wizen'd and torn they reach at last
The thorny hedge, and there held fast
By cold embraces of the wind
Brief anchorage and respite find.

The tortured air wails out its woe;
The moaning trees rock to and fro;
With tight-braced thews the oak stands fast
To wrestle boldly with the blast.

The tempest rushes to the shock;
At grips the giants writhe and rock;
The oak tho' stagger'd by the blow
Turns ever back to face his foe.

The weary day wears on; at length
The thriftless gale expends its strength;
And chafing at unwished-for rest,
Sulks sullen in the barrier'd west.

Thro' misty wrack day's bleary eye
At eve peers thro' the riven sky,
And with its last weak arrows sped
Shrinks shuddering to its murky bed.

Now day is stricken to its knees,
And night comes sobbing thro' the trees;
The wind sinks down the vale a-sighing;
The year in Autumn's lap lies dying.

To Winter

IS it inevitable then that I,
Mute, uncomplaining as the patient tree,
Bow to the cold implacable decree
Of Winter's herald; watching from on high
The leaves fall down or on the wind go by,
Leaving me voiceless? No! I will not be
In this the sport of time, nor bend the knee
To the cold frown he flings me from the sky!
Henceforth I smile defiance, setting bounds
To his o'erproud presumption. Sullen looks
That strike the birds all dumb, and clamp the brooks'
Wild melody, shall meet a glance more strong.
For in my heart a deeper summer sounds
That now awakes and trembles into song.

A Roadside Blossom

I FOUND it on the roadside
Pearl'd with the morning dew;
The sweetest flower of loveliness
The Roadman ever grew.

It was so fair I won not
To pluck it as I pass'd,
Yet many a lingering backward glance
A-down the road I cast.

And when the winding roadway
Had hid it from my view,
Its beauty fed the mind with light
And kept the heart-strings true.

It nursed my budding vision
And tuned my early song;
It drew my spirit through the sense,
Yet kept the senses strong.

And still it is a guerdon
Tho' passionless and light
That lends a glory to the day,
And visions to the night.

The Kingdom of Heaven

'TWAS in the street that the vision came
That seemed to quench the sun's bright flame
And flood the street with a wondrous light
A thousandfold than day more bright.
I stood entranced as the glory spread
And over all its radiance shed,
Yet felt no shadow of surprise
Nor sought to veil or screen my eyes,
Laying my whole soul out to guess
The meaning of such loveliness.
Then as the sheeted splendour grew
Robing the world in youth anew,
The vision of the seer of old,
Recorded in Earth's book of gold,
Kindled the flash of thought to birth,
"'Tis the kingdom of Heaven come down to earth."
And with the thought that was almost a cry,
A sound at first scarce more than a sigh
Swelled swiftly up till the whole world trembled
With song as of angels in choir assembled,
Till it seemed as though the very skies
Shook with the sound, and then with sighs
It fell soft echoing on the trees
And slowly fainted on the breeze;
Passing at last from sense away,
As the light sank back to the light of day.
And I stood alone in the village street,
In spell to the music of tiny feet

That tripped and tinkled with echoes light
Then passed with their tiny cause from sight.

For the kingdom of Heaven that I saw come
Was a child, the flower of a humble home;
The light that was more than the light of day,
Was the tender glance that she cast my way;
And the sound that set the whole world ringing,
Was just the song I heard her singing.

The Sweetest Sound

THE sweetest sound that echo ever wakes!
Far sweeter than all symphonies that spring
From master skill poured out on lute or string,
E'en sweeter than the hymn the throstle makes
When roused to rapture as the glad day breaks,
Or even than the song the tall trees sing
Wooed by the West's importunate whispering
Is children's laughter. 'Tis a sound that shakes
The soul's hid sanctuaries with soft thrills
Of bell-like music. It unseals the ear
To heaven's own harmonies, whose tones more clear
Win through the peerless heart where innocence
Keeps the bright door ajar and tuneless ills
Cloud not as yet its love-lit radiance.

The Play-Hour

WHAT sound could be more sweet or scene more fair!
From yonder haven in the wooded swell
Of earth's mild bosom, where the hill and dell
Melt in each other's flowing lines, and where,
Straight upward through the sun-lit winter air,
Blue wisps of smoke in sleepy silence tell
Where simple wants and peaceful labours dwell,
Come the glad cries of children. Who would care
Who once has learned to love such scenes as this,
To toil for coin in those vast human hives,
Where squalor holds the whip and hunger drives,
And pleasure, crowned a king, the sceptre wields;
Where men know not earth's primal founts of bliss
Nor that deep peace the sweet-breathed country yields.

"The Sun Child"

TEN summers' suns have kissed her,
Ten summers and no more,
Yet not one ray has missed her
Of all their golden store,
Till none can look upon her
But looking must adore.

The sun within her tresses
Revels from hour to hour,
Hides in their soft recesses,
Laughs from their golden shower,
As though to leave their sweetness
Were quite beyond his power.

She gathers from his kisses
The spiritual fire,
That builds all earthly blisses
And tunes the heavenly lyre,
That raises the ignoble,
And bids all hearts aspire.

For beauty shines from out her
In love compelling throes,
And makes a heaven about her,
Like scents around a rose,
That soothes the soul and giveth
An infinite repose.

Sunbeam

I LAY a-dreaming—
Or was it seeming?
Methought I saw a sunbeam gleaming.

Its life was won
Ere the world was spun,
Already born at the birth of the sun.

It had its start
In the fiery Heart
Of the Flame that doth all life impart.

It sought the earth
For fuller birth,
And blossom'd forth from souls of worth.

And there it lay
In the fragrant hay,
With tumbling curls, a child at play.

And I fell in trance
To the dazzling glance
Of the lustrous gold in its romping dance.

So proved my dreaming
More than seeming
That 'fore my eyes, O vision bright!
A golden toss of tangled light
With leaping life and laughter beaming
A very sunbeam lay a-gleaming.

"The Blossom"

SHE is fragrant with the sweetness
Of violets all a-blow,
And decked in dainty neatness
As snowdrop in the snow.

Her features all are moulded
As delicate and fair
As rosebud half unfolded
Unto the summer air.

She has a way of drooping
Her pretty little head,
Like to the harebell stooping
Over its dewy bed.

Sometimes I hear her crooning
Such happy little themes,
My head is set a-swooning
Into the land of dreams.

Demurely when she meets me
She slips her hand in mine,
And innocently greets me;
You see, she's only nine.

Farewell !

THEY are taking away my sunshine,
They are taking that away,
That more truly than the sunshine
Lent glory to the day;
And the very life within me
Shines with a feebler ray.

Flown is the daily pleasure
Of greetings at my door;
The sweet confiding treasure
Of childish love is o'er;
Her grace and dainty beauty
Shall be my joy no more.

Speak not of heavens hereafter,
For just with her to be,
To hear her sunny laughter,
To swing her 'neath the tree,
And tell her fairy tales
Was heaven enough for me.

One note from the chord of gladness,
One string of the heart's delight,
One check on the swell of sadness,
One charm from the sense of sight,
One spell of the world's enchantment
Fails with to-morrow's light.

Beneath the Trees

Prologue

TO thoughtful minds this utterance I consign,
Not so much championing its claim to art,
For oft from use and rule it doth depart,
Nor yet as always to my deep design
Conforming; Truth and word so ill combine;
But that it welled from out an o'er-full heart,
And seemed to force my utterance with its smart,
Falling self-marshalled into metered line.

* * * * * *

A Voice from the Trees

'TIS May, and Nature's birth to life anew
Is now with joy attained; a pæan of praise
Vibrates throughout the country's breadth, and ways
We late did shun now tempt our willing feet.
The woodlands' plaintive note doth bid us pause
From sordid barter and the market's beat,
And commune with ourselves, to see if we,
Whilst nature's thousand throats are stretched with praise,
Cannot from o'ercharged heart some surplus raise
In silent adoration.
'Neath the trees
I early walk, to drink the morning's cup
Of nectared purity; whilst all around

A subtle sense of peace pervades the air;
'Twould seem I'd caught the morn upon its knees;
So tense with beauty's worship is the scene;
For one brief moment, silence falls,—a hush,
As tho' embodiment of soul through form,
In all the varied shapes of Nature round,
Had caught its breath, in trancéd ecstasy;
Nor were it strange if now unto mine ear
A voice should sound to bid me take my shoes
From off my feet, for surely this fair spot
Is holy ground.
But who are these who come
And hurry on their way this early hour,
Adown the beaten by-way skirting round
This shady grove,—as, looking not aside,
With faces fixed and set, they press their course?
It is the day that man has set apart
For rest and worship; these, of zealous mind,
Would not be late in rendering of their store
The service which they feel it joy to make.
And yet a strain of wonderment doth rise
Within my heart, that they can pass *this* way,
Nor see that here are met and blent together
All th' elements and fibre of their need
To worship God. Or am I wrong in this
And is God 'stranged from Nature? Has He left
His work to dwell in man's?
I watch them pass,
Nor lack I charity to render them
The honour that's their due, I do but muse,
And lost awhile in labyrinthal thought
Upon the inconsistencies of life,
Walk softly on beneath the shady way.

The morning deepens, with increasing stir
The tiny serfs of nature are on wing,
Filling the air with busy harmony,
Fluttering from store to store of pollened flower.
Lost in the sky, the lark his morning song
Is singing, while from hidden leafy nook
And echoing copse, his feathered kindred thrill
The bursting sense with throbbing happiness.
And I for company and converse true
Do not go lacking, for from every tree
I pass beneath rapt voices seem to fall,
And speak to me in sweet solicitude.
Ah yes, when these sequestered paths I tread
A peace descends upon me, past all power
To comprehend, a peace that wraps my soul
In purest reverie; whilst all my care
Drops from me like a cloak; till loosed and free
My spirit leaps to silent contemplation.
Oft I renew, oft I recall the joys
That here I reap, and I shall ne'er forget
These friends who alter not, who oft have smoothed
My ruffled mind to calm serenity.

Ye works of art divine, the trees I love,
Beauty materialised,—I would I had
Art of the singer to immortalise
Your stately avenues of perfect form
Down which I oft-time walked with reverent step,
Thinking out thoughts of import to the soul.
Ah! Temple, church and altar all were ye,
Balm to my sickened soul to surfeit fed
With the vain shows and blindnesses of men,
Who bind upon the lowly cast of mind

Burdens too grievous to be borne, and teach
An omnipresent God, who yet must be
Approached and served in one man-fashioned way.
Ah! so I cannot serve—I cannot praise;
'Neath other forms I cannot help but see
My God there, where His ever-acting laws
Limn out in infinite diversity
The symbols of His Word, made flesh or flower,
Or shower or shine, or winged thing; I love
These forms alive with power, warm from His hand.
Ever to me the tree and flower are voiced
With utterance divine.
Here 'neath the shade
The spirit anthems never cease to ring,
And every leaf reveals the mighty Mind,
Who made it thus to be a passing *form*
Of a *Reality* that passes not,
And thus because it is just what it is,
It cannot help but sing and beauteous be.
What other forms are needed for our aid
Than here are found, unmarred by erring man,
Free of all false adornment from without,
Clad only in the chastity of thoughts,
Expressed in curving bough and clustering leaf
A-droop, in lowly wise, and answering
With sighs and smiles to every whispering breeze?
What marvels ye of strength and beauty wed,
Of power and love in perfect balance set,
All yielding to the gale, yet not to break!
Oh, beeches straight and lithe with archéd crowns,
Bending your graceful limbs in trancéd poise
Down to the spellbound sward, as tho' to pluck
The buttercups that grow around your feet;

As some fair Psyche stepping from the bath,
Bedecked with pearls, the homage of the pool,
And radiant with the joy of perfect health,
Casts forth on all around the sweetest scents
Born of chaste thought, the flowering of life.
Vain symboling! as well I might have shown
The beauty that adheres to human form
By reference to thee; I strive in vain,
Nor can I hope, all tongue-tied as I am,
To find befitting words for facts so fair,
Such rapturous portrayal here set forth
Throughout the heavenly Craftsman's flawless work.
Ye elms of mighty girth and rigid strength,
Begnarled and scarred by many a tempest stemmed,
More marred than beech because ye will not bend,
So proud ye are and scornful of the blast;
Like dauntless giants with huge and brawny thighs,
Standing erect in frowning wakefulness
To face all strain and battle of the storm!
Sweet friends! sweet friends! of changeless love to me,
Giving me ever that which from my kind
I ne'er have known, Love unconditional;
How oft in press and travail of the soul,
Have I not sought your voiceless sympathy,
Drawing sweet comfort and fresh power to bear
The jars and buffets of this world of nays,
Where high resolves oft fail and hope nigh dies.
Yes, temple, church and altar all were ye,
The sacrament of whose pure intercourse
Sufficed me for forgiveness and fulfilled
Love's deepest call for service or for praise.
Oh, strange indeed and past all reason's bounds
That men should turn aside from works of God,

Alive and vibrant with Indwelling Power,
Stamped with the signet of creative Mind,
To enter gloomy piles of brick and stone;
As though the Master's works in Nature seen,
Unworthy were and needed art of man
Ere they a fitting house might form for Him.
Awake! all ye who look for truth in creed,
In doctrine, myth, or method made of man!
Train ye your eyes all forms alike to solve
Into the mystic substance of the soul,
Which is a spirit, and by spirit sees.
Seek ye in open air and pastures free,
In dewy vale, or upland wild, or where
The cloud rides through the sky and rainbow spans
The distant scene. Seek there if ye would find
The Power, who is all forms unto all minds.
If service you would give, confine it not
In any strictured dogma, creed or rule.
Know that all times and quarters of the earth
Are holy days and holy place enough
In which to render to th' almighty Love
The service which, altho' He needs it not,
(Since all things of their essence render praise),
He yet rewards with joy beyond all gauge.
Where'er is found a heart abrim with love
Or impulse to adore and serve, *there* stand
A church and altar, sacred unto God,
Holy as holiest temple built of man.
Our fathers have cast ashes in our eyes,
The dust of ages moulders all our thought;
We cannot see, we cannot think; a crust
Of hardened letter all the truth conceals,
And man in blindness gropes,—submissive yields

His priceless mind, a slave beneath the yoke
Of guidance from without; and speaks of faith
As somewhat that commends his ready gift
Of credence all unquestion'd to such facts
As he, from having lost his power of sight,
From ever seeing Truth by borrowed light,
Doth fail to understand. Oh blindfold man!
Thy spirit sleeps; thy mind, as spirit's home
Fast hypnotised to dogma and report
Ere yet thy lips could lisp a single word,
Is yet unborn. What serves thee for a mind
Is not thine own; 'tis but an alien growth;
Yet thou dost let it stead thee in thy prime.
Mark well the growth of seeds! The embryo plant
Ere it can gain a grip upon the soil
In which it is to grow, feeds for a while
Upon the tiny store its parent bare
And housed within a husk, to nurse its span
Of brief dependence. Yet the day soon comes
When of itself it draws first-hand its sap
From out the fertile bosom of the earth.
Thine adult ripeness bids thee so take root
And feed thy soul with insight, not with faith.
The limb or sense that's lost thou canst not use,
Nor yet if thou refuse to use the limb
Or sense thou hast, shall it remain to thee,
But 'twill grow weak and pass; and even so,
If thou wouldst see, and find thy spirit wings
To soar aloft and use thy birthright here,
As son of God, a son's unhindered right
Straight to his Father's heart to win, nor need
Some lifeless form or priest to go between
Thy Father's love and thee,—rise up and claim

Thine inborn power, now use the inner eye,
Press to the truth within thyself and gain
Thy liberty.
Now open thou thine eyes
From which have dropt for aye the scales, that fear,
The child of ignorance, has interposed.
Now may'st thou learn that all the earth is blessed,
And every wind-swept space a court of God.
All places, times and actions, if thy will
Be pure, are sacred through thy use of them.
Thou knowest not thy power, thy godlike mind,
That can of *any* action make a prayer.
Whate'er thou dost as 'neath the eye of Heaven,
Is holy service done within its doors;
And wheresoe'er thou deemest God to dwell,
Lo! there He dwells whilst thou dost seek Him there.
Make not of one paved court or four square walls
The mean and narrow limit of His throne,
Nor set apart a single day of seven,
Cramming thy worship into one short shrift.
Open thine eyes, on every inch of earth
Is writ His signet in a thousand forms,
And miracles unnumbered wait thy ken,
Wouldst thou but pause and ponder on awhile
The myriad facts and visions of the field,
When thou dost walk therein.
What seekest thou
Within the man-blessed doors that Nature lacks?
Tradition? God? a holy place? I say
Thou livest now, thy revelation find . . .
Now,—in thine own life, thine own soul and time;
Lean never on report, each hour repeats
The quoted past, and plants the future here.

That God creates the earth anew, and makes
Of former things a scarce-remembered dream,
That hell for the evil yawns, that heaven awaits
Thy claim, the cheated grave, the spiritual world
Are facts for thee *to-day*. Why wilt thou draw
Upon the past alone to build thy faith?
Art thou content before the frequent scoffer
Some text or quoted book in proof to place?
Perchance his doubt is honest—'tis at least
His own, whilst thy belief on hearsay stands.
And yet there breathes to-day for heavenly truth
A living witness—Nature,—whence men turn
To a past that's dead—the letter of the Light,
And find no shrine on all God's beauteous earth,
Save in some church, 'fore which to bend the knee.
A greater witness still, is thine own soul
Wherethrough the perfect light of heaven itself
Streams to the pure, in loving voice of God.
All facts for loss or gain are here and now;
Out in the sunlit fields God walks and speaks.
Where may'st thou find cathedral domed so high
As thou dost build where'er thy reverent thought
Soars upward.
What sayest thou, that only so
The very noblest cast of mind can serve?
Oh God! . . . and I . . .
But thou art not my judge; I will but drop
My face into my hands, and silence keep.
'Tis not the place that's holy, 'tis the mind,
The attitude of thought thou bringest there.
'Twas early pressed on thy then pliant mind
Only the purest thought, with reverent mien,
Into the church to take, and thus it is.

Thou makest of thyself a sanctuary there.
But how is it with Nature? Thou dost here
Thy thoughtless moments spend, and thrust on her
Thy lowest mood, thy selfish mean desire,
Dost on her pour the refuse of thy soul.
She all receives and turns to pure account,
E'en as she will receive, some future day,
Thy rotting corpse all rank with vile decay,
To turn to uses new, set free from taint.
But bring to her the mind thou giv'st the church,
And then thou'lt find, wherever thou dost go,
An altar high enough to bear aloft
The sacrifice of thy sublimest praise.
Oh, happy trees, wise, whispering, thought-clad trees!
All questions of the soul ye answer well,
All facts of life and after-life ye show,
Endurance, hope and trust ye always teach,
And by a straining upward constant build
A beauty upon beauty, which, to tell
As 't rightly should be told,—well, I should need
The tongue of angel and his power as well.
Apt emblems ye of life, as life should be;
The downward draught on earth, the upward strain;
Fed of the soil for body, yet for breath,
Stretching your leaves out quivering with desire
Up to the azure vault of God's blue sky;
Your spirit fact up-building of the thoughts
Which from the higher realms of sweetened air
Ye so draw down.
How oft beneath the shade
Resemblances I see 'twixt tree and man.
How oft below its standard man oft falls,
Curst with desires engendered of the soil;

Ah, fed and bred of earth, beyond escape
From tendency to evil—body's dower,
Man yet must yearn and upward strain to God.
That man is blessed and happy in his life
Who knows aright to choose and imitate
In nature's ways, and where he must transcend.

At-one with God, the soul of man transforms
The outer world, and every true desire
For intercourse opens the inner eye,
Blots out illusion, and the real lays bare,
Till all the myriad forms in field and brake
Are seen as spirit-words abrim with truth.
The soul of man is man's interpreter
Which ever from within gives utterance to,
And faithful Revelation of the Word,
Which is, in him, through flesh made manifest.
But man from Self shrinks ever back ashamed,
From having wandered so, and 'smirched his soul
With evils, born of ignorance, long ingrained,
An ignorance of his Source and Origin;
And looks for God without him, far in space;
Nor will he recognise the truth that Christ
Announced, that God is found within, altho'
He calls himself a Christian. Would he read
That inner revelation of the Word
That in him wells, the very presence there
Of mystery so vast—his very self—
A son of God, I say, this conscious fact
Would all his ills disperse, and set him free
To do the right in liberty divine.
Why is it so? Why takes this peerless dawn
So long to break? Why do men's slothful souls

So far through working hours in slumber sleep?
Ah! men their fetters love, nor care to shake
From off their darkened mind the brazen cap
That all their thought benumbs;—keeping a crutch
To stay their weakling mind its rightful toil;
Because, forsooth, it so much easier is
To lean, than of their nerveless selves to stand
Upright.
Beside all this, they have no time
To spend on Self, the higher Self within;
They have a business wed, besides a wife;
Their soul can wait, this life they pledge to gain,
Selling immortal souls for shams and dross.
Assume thine inborn right to read the Word
And fearless break, but yet with reverence,
The seal that priests have placed thereon, and creeds
Have magnified. Shake off the dwarfing weights
Of superstitions old; expand thy thought
And flood with bounding health thy spirit form
With spirit fact from nature gleaned, which now
With gain of clearer sight, thou see'st divine.
Oft with another, walking 'neath the green,
A silence comes upon me, and the sense
Of spirit voices speaking from the trees
Puts fetters on my feet and bends my head.
Then he beside me walking oft will seek
By look or word for reason for the seal
That locks my lips and inward turns my thought,
While he, my friend, would friendly converse make.
He knows not that in church my spirit bends,
And words offend and are irreverent.
Oh, for a perfect friend attuned to feel
The sanctity of silence! Such an one

'Twere joy to hold. How oft from heaven we turn
And fall to earth in bitterness and pain
Through spoken word; for silence often shames
Our purest utterance, and half our words
Are needless; wheresoe'er attuned hearts
In perfect understanding dwell, a look—
A touch is speech enough.
The highest facts
Are ever past the power of spoken word;
The deep communications of the soul
In silence and in solitude arise.
Words are the froth of life, if they be used
To break a silence for the breaking's sake.
Hush thou thy lips, from Nature lessons take.
The voice of God, a-ring in field and brake,
Gives grander utterance far than ever thou
Canst hope to make.
Oh, to the woodland come,
And reverent spread a pure expectant mind
With wisdom fed, in silence 'neath the trees:
God walks these timbered aisles no less, nay more
Than in the sunless house that men have built,
And think by empty speech or forms to bless.
Come thou apart, thine own desire to praise
Thine own fair temple builds, and floods with strains
Of harmony its boundless aisles and naves.
Come where the fiat of His mind unfolds,
In perfect symbol and through perfect laws,
The highest facts—the only Fact, that we,
Here or hereafter, e'er can hope to know
Of Him who is not named or understood
By any name or symbol men have coined.
Why wilt thou use the hide-bound forms and words

Of bygone age? Awake, and use thine own.
Why use the symbol of another's thought,
Begging thy vision of the truth? Arise,
Stand upright of thyself, use thine own eyes;
The self-same power, that in the seer of old
Saw facts divine, sees now no less through thine.
God's one with man: thyself thy saviour art;
And yet the *power* is God's. Thou prayest Him
To mend thy ways! Yet that is thine own work.
Look thou within for strength, which inward wells,
Wouldst thou but claim thine own, do thine own part!
If pray thou must,—the only prayer that serves
With possibility of answer here,
Is life and act, no mere desire avails;
For present, past and future circumstance,
All, all are born to cause and birthed of law;
There is no chance; so set the cause to work,
And cease to beg or hope to cheat the laws.
"But God is cause" thou say'st, and so dost hope
By prayer to Him to reap an unearned gift.
In part 'tis true; He gives, indeed, whilst thou
Canst never really earn; but yet He gives
Through thine own act and virtuous willing.
For God helps those who strive to help themselves.
The highest prayer is Love—a love that binds
The thought to act—man to his Source, so that
At one with Power thro' love of Right
The right in man prevails. Thou art a tower
Of strength when thou dost make thine *acts* to pray.
Wouldst thou to virtue win thine upland way?
Pray! if it help thy mind to hold, undimmed,
The goal in sight. Not vain this impulse set
Deep-rooted in our souls; for tho' within

God surges in deep tides as native power,
We are as fractions of a mighty Whole,
And are as helpless all as speechless babes,
When we would act alone, unblent in Him,
Who, tho' He ever towers above—beyond,
Must yet be sought within, as each man's own,
Self-forged, self-wielded will.
Pray—if thou must,
No less remains it true, that acts of God,
(If acts they be, of God, as men conceive)
Called answer unto prayer, are never shown
In alien gift of power: to interfere
'Twixt cause and sure result He never deigns,
Since that whereby facts press from cause to end
Is God. If answer comes unto our prayer—
'Tis power to *bear:* God works no miracle
To cure our pain, but sends unto our need—
Himself, that so we may as gods *endure.*

Turn not to brother man to tell thine ills,
Nor think that through some person interposed
'Twixt cause and end, thy sins may be absolved;
Nor yet that any facts outside thy will
Or act can "save thy soul," as some do say.
Unto thyself absolve thyself; the *most*
That man can do or say unto thy need
Is patchwork act and hearsay, whilst the *least*
That thou *must* do is evil ways to hate;
For till thou dost, thou canst not 'scape their grip;
But like as love a union is, so hate's
Disseverance, and when thou risest up
In native strength to hate thine error's ways,
The chains of habit fall from off thy feet,

Cleft link from link by the all-cleaving sword
Of thy pure willing; nor can aught be found,
Save this, to snap the chain thy past has forged.
What will awry did form pure will must break.
But man by blind man led doth shuffling creep
To others blind, and in his readiness
To snatch the smallest ray of light or hope,
Cleaves unto that which doth but bind anew
Fresh burdens on his back. I know the weak
Must priests and leaders have, but why wilt *thou*
Be weak? 'Tis time to wake—to find thy strength
And don thy spirit robes, that fall to thee
By heavenly call and right, surpassing all
The vested power of priests. Why wilt thou place
Thy princely neck beneath the foot of man,
When thou shouldst nod and bow thy mind to none
Of mortal birth, but only unto God?
True priests there are, I know, and still must be,
Protectors of the weakly, guides unto
The blind, and if thou seekest such, then mark
The sign, for signs they bear, tho' 'tis not formed
Of cloth or any robe that they may wear.
Such shall not point to truth from out a book
Nor call thee to some form, in which there's need
For him to act, and by such things as these
Enslave thee to a creed, or banded sect
That doth him feed. Not thus the rightful priest,
Who doth not lord, but serve his brother man,
Who doth by right divine his office hold,
And has not gained his brief to teach the Truth
From touch and word through man-appointed form,
But ever from within himself doth draw
To sate his brother's need that light of truth

That sets him loosed and free from outer law
And stands him on his feet, erect and strong,
To serve himself and be his own high priest;
Doth ever seek to put him into touch
With native force within his inmost Self,
That he may of himself, in deep self-trust,
His own salvation win.
If overmuch
I seem to press this fact, that here is writ
With oft-recurring trend of thought and pen,
'Tis that I know, that tho' this truth is aged
Twain thousand years, it still doth waiting stand,
Rejected and contemned; and this despite
That wondrous-fashioned life, that once was spent
Out to its heart's last sweated drop of love
And self-rejection, that this saving fact
Might stamp its truth upon the minds of men.
The centuries go by and epochs wane,
Whilst life and death, in ceaseless interchange
Of opportunity, all fruitless fall;
And paupered man, despite that treasured wealth,
Those pearls of priceless worth in truth's true coin
Bequeathed him by the sages of the past,
Doth beg and steal in abject bankruptcy;
Doth look for worth midst straws and mouldering rags,
Nor sees, forsooth, the circ of studded gems
By patient angels held above his head
Waiting to crown him king of life and fate.
For look you! if this power be not *in* man,
How then can man be free? How, if the truth
Be not in man, his native heritance,
How then can he, with all his vaunted powers,
Perceive the truth? For we can never see

But what we *are*, and all the splendoured sense
Of outer facts is but the mirrored sight
Of facts within.
Around this inner core
Of truth and power in man lies all his claim
To freedom of the will,—if 'tis not there,
Then we should haste to cast as best we may
This mockery of life aside, nor care
To spend a moment's thought on right and wrong.
Then if the truth and power be both in man,
What other words are these than if we say
That God doth dwell *in* man, not separate
And twain, but one, the very Self of him?
This is the Great Idea which seeks to print
Its beauteous will upon the world of sense,
And waits to plant, in patience absolute
(Since time and eons of time are nought to it),
Its virtues manifold and attributes
Divine, without or let or hindrances
Upon the mind, and thro' the mind, upon
The form and features of evolving man.
Why help to stay this leaning Pisa tower
Of leaners leaning ever, where each man
Refers to man, and he again to man,
While all refuse to *act* upon the truth
Of God *in* man, altho' indeed 'tis claimed
By churches here that they this truth do teach.
They teach indeed, tho' 'tis not Christ the *fact*
But unto Christ the *person* do they reach.
The base enlaid of old still firm doth stand,
Still scintillates with gems of living fact;
But built upon the Rock of Truth, false men
This house, which might have stood throughout all time,

Have built a-lean to suit their slothful mind.
Oh, trust thyself to win alone to power;
For thou art anchored in the infinite,
And hast command, thro' Will, of all its store;
But love, but will aright,—and there's no flower
Of virtue grown but thou may'st pluck and wear,
No thorn or briar of thought or habit base
But thou may'st snatch it from thy bosom forth,
Tho' it by time and use be rooted there.
Cease for the past to weep, resolve anew;
The tender seed thou hast so often set
With many a prayer into the furrowed scar
Remorse has cleft, only to blight and fade,
Choked of the weed and bramble growing there,
Or parched in arid waste, or worse than all,
Burnt to an ash with passion's fiery glare,
Shall one day shoot and push its roots amain
Forth into every cranny of thy heart,
Shall blossom there with flower of heavenly hue.
Oh, yield not to despair, resolve anew,
And instant from thy fainting soul are swept
The stains of wrong, whate'er the body's blight.
Yet know that through thy willed or thoughtless act
An immanent cause doth build; there's no event
Uncaused, no act without its sure result;
Look thou to it; cast from thy mind all thoughts
Which be not such as thou wouldst speak aloud
To dearest friend, and that is God Himself.

And what is this thou dost forgiveness call?
What! Think'st thou that the past can be out-writ?
The smallest act or thought unfruitful fall?
Not so, not so, by no means can the past

Be wholly nulled, thou canst but modify
By act and thought anew for right and good,
For sake of right, effect of past misdeed.
The inner fact which men forgiveness call
Of thine own will is born the instant thou
Dost will for right anew; by this one act,
If sure it be, thou art at-one with God.
That which in substance of the mind is built
Into the fabric of thy life by deed
Is fixed and set; waste not thy time in tears,
Thy plumb-line steadfast cast, setting thine aim
Straight for the zenith, there thy journey lies.
Be sure of this, thine own amended will
Alone avails to set at-one with God
Thy sundered life, thy soul with Maya blind;
Look not from self away, none but thyself
Can save thyself, this is the God within.
And this for comfort take, lest thou shouldst grieve
Too sorely for the ills and thousand crimes
And vagaries of men, or think that right
Lies vanquished by the triumph of the wrong—
Wrong triumphs not, nor are the ills of life,
Its tragedies and tears, its sins and griefs
Of *final* fact; they *are* indeed, but yet
Are means to lofty end; and being facts
That pass, have no reality or life.
Stir not thy mind to hot ferment, nor lose
The level balance of a settled calm,
Because the wrong exists and vaunts itself.
Be not dismayed, leave to the craven, blind
With ignorance, belief that things go wrong;
I say they *cannot*, howsoe'er they may
Appear to—here. The scheme all perfect is,

A Mind presides, there is no rift nor flaw,
Where every act or possibility
Of failure's fact is all provided for.
And say'st thou then, that granting this as true
We are but puppets, and our life as such
With all its cruelties is purposeless?
Far, far from fact is this, for "part of fate
Is man's free will"; 'tis counted in the scheme;
And if my words would seem to bid thee rest
Always content with life, with all its wrongs,
I mean not this, far from it; man's free will
A power is of itself, a cause; and thus
He helps to make the world just what it is;
And should he stand aside and cease to act,
Saying that all is well, and there's no need
For his small part; his very idleness
A factor then becomes; he cannot 'scape
His share for good or ill, in the vast work
Which God through man and nature doth promote.
Our wills are free, but being only parts
Of one great whole, are blent and modified
Each with each other, and excess with lack,
In an Inscrutable, Unerring Way,
Which ever through vast solitudes of time,
Unhindered by the element that men
In their near-sightedness have evil called,
Right forward presses to a mighty End,
So wondrous, beautiful and good, that e'en
The purest or the wisest of our kind
Have never dreamed or dared to think upon.
For all that happens here is overruled,
No matter how we plan or think to weave
Some set design that we have preconceived;

A pattern's formed indeed, but 'tis not ours;
A defter hand than ours the shuttle wields;
Some local colouring we give 'tis true;
We may co-operate, we may delay.
God *is;* Life *is*, and Heaven; through thy free will
Thou mayest enter in and really Be.
So waste not on the past thine innate force
In vain regrets; self-censure, magnified
By constant self-reflection, easy breeds
Distrust in self; believe that thou art strong
And strong thou art.
And what indeed at last
Are error's ways but mist before the Sun;
A little earth-born vapour o'er our eyes
That clouds from sight the source of all our life,
That makes us see as some dark bodiment
Of penal laws, by fog all magnified,
The light of truth and love; for God *is* Love.
For since 'tis known all facts from cause do spring,
And thou art conscious of a universe
In perfect balance and by perfect laws
Maintained and ruled,—if thou canst look on life,
Canst cast away for once that misty veil—
Familiarity, that dims all sight,
Canst realise the miracle it is;
Know thus that through all substance runs a thread,
An essence, inconceivable to thought
Unless as Love. If for one moment's time
This Love could cease to rule, the universe
Would straight asunder fall, and chaos reign.
For Love's that subtle principle that wields
The spheres in ceaseless rhythm through the sky,
And keeps the solid earth from bursting forth

Into the void; that tilts the opening bud
Towards the sun to catch the kiss of life,
And smile its rapture forth in peerless flower.
The same this power with that which bids us seek
Ourselves in other hearts at one with us;
Draws man to woman, mother to her babe.
There are not diverse powers, all power is one,
In diverse planes and manners infinite
Portrayed and manifested,—Love Divine.
Hadst thou but eyes to see, e'en now thou couldst
In this dull commonplace reality
Of daily toil, beneath the outer veil
Of first appearance, find a perfect Now.
Thou may'st see through the plan, as favoured one
Is let into the secret of a play;
May'st ope the doors and pass behind the scenes;
When, shouldst thou tremble at the perilled case
Of thy immortal soul,—here, all is changed
And thy too frequent fears are seen to be
But painted semblances upon a screen
Of make-believe,—but parts within the play
Borne by the actor Time, who tramps the boards
And gravely doth gesticulate awhile,
With sorry mask and false accoutrements,
Until the play is o'er.
E'en now we may
In imperfection's husk see perfect seed
For future perfect blossoming; and this
Is not alone for some eternity
Of life beyond the grave, but shall be born
Of Time and cradled on the lap of earth
Through mind of man. If anything is sure
Then this is sure; for earthly seed may fail

And fruitless fall, but Word of God dies never;
What He has oped His lips to say He will
Most surely finish, and to base so vast
Give fitting fane, with spire as high as Love,
As deep and broad as truth.
And this it is
That frees the wondrous scheme from every taint
Or charge of wantonness,—tho' other pleas
There are of equal point; for tho' I dwell
So oft in peace and even now do speak
From o'er-full heart of heavenly happiness,
I yet do know, the while I liken life
To some poor play or show, this is not all
The fact, nor half of it. We are not pressed
Into this vast arena of the world
For ends so paltry or for test alone.
Ah no! I see the bended back, the hands
By labour worn, the body sickened oft
With want or pain, I see man's heart as well,
Its aching need, its sense of higher aim
Which here we cannot win, the perfect love
We vision as our due and duty too.
All this I see and know, yet know as well
These pains and sweated toils are but the signs
Of travailing for birth, from whence shall come
The perfect child the ages shall bring forth.
Millennium, Utopia, the states
Of Plato, More, or Fichte, all are one
With other heavens, to be e'en here and now
Anticipated by each single soul
Through virtuous will, and as a future fact
On earth, in Time, tho' we shall see it not;
Unless 'tis true, as eastern sages say,

That souls are born again to forms of clay
Till they do body forth the perfect will,
Express through form the pure Idea Divine.

Reck not of evils, for they are but goads
To prick us on to fresh endeavouring.
Talk not of hell, this lying nightmare lay
In trusting wakefulness. There is no fact
Or circumstance throughout thy life, which thou,
In thy last reckoning, shall count as loss.
All, all shall bend and twist beneath a Will
Of swerveless purpose to a glorious end
Of good that none escape and all shall win.
Talk never more of sin or hell or death;
If thou wilt only *be*, thou canst not die,
For naught that really *is* can ever end;
That only dies that is already dead;
Thus if thou *art*, thou art for ever bound
To *be*;—but find thy soul—thy surety
For life, and thou wilt never doubt again.

The trees that grow the strongest and most fair
Do stand alone, while those within the grove
Are weaklings all; the plant that clings and preys
We call a parasite. Be not as these!
But rather imitate the noble pine,
Which straight up to the zenith casts her thought,
To draw from thence her power to grow upright.
'Twere well at times if we could close and lock
The fivefold doors, wherethro' our wandering thought
Is lured to thriftless prodigality.
So might we learn again to seek for power
Within ourselves, so might our trespass cease

On barren planes of past dead lettering,
So might we 'scape from Maya and illusion.
Oh, tear from time and space, save here and now,
The laws and modes of truth and man's salvation!
Repay thy loans, erase thy copied script
From out thy mind; reform and recreate
Thy world anew and weld its fluid form
To fashion of thy will, and inner view
Of what is fair and good; confine thy aim
Not only to the beautiful and good,
But also have for end and purpose—*use!*
Come out from dead conformity; arise!
And of thine own free force, create! create!
For now 'tis day and we are adult grown,
High time it is we doffed our infant thought
And donned the shimmering robes with which the truth
Doth drape our quickened souls.
'Tis to thy shame
That thou dost grudge the time and sweat of mind
To find the light which ever in thee shines,
Which wells and springs from God's high heaven of Truth.
"Thus saith the Lord" spake forth the seers of old,
Nor would they point to God without, in space,
Who knew He dwelt within and used their lips.
And Jesus the Divine doth likewise speak;
"I and My Father, We are one." Yet so
There might no error creep into His words—
"Why dost thou call *Me* good, there is none good
Save God"; again He saith, "The words I speak
I speak not of Myself, but He, My Father
Who dwells in Me, 'tis He who doth the works.'
The word of God must ever flesh assume

Ere flesh can hear, nor has there ever come
This word of truth from heaven above to man
Save through the mind of man.
This is that Light
That lights the world, the spirit light of God;
This is that light that blinds the worldly-wise—
Reveals itself to babes, and those that are
Of simple mind; this is that light that men,
Who others thrall in slaveries of form,
Essay to hide beneath a bushel, when
Its rays should light the world and minds of men.
Man fears to trust the light when it doth spread
Its liberating beams upon his thought;
He has been taught to shut his mind to thoughts
That tally not with "articles of faith,"
The light of reason, when it touches facts
That bear upon his faith, he must distrust.
I pray you for your very manhood's sake
To change all this and trust your thought to win
Its own and unique *way* to truth, which wears
To every single mind, a *form* unique!
Fear not to think the highest of thyself
For thou shalt ever find a Higher yet!
E'en tho' thy heart should dare in some high flight
Of exaltation rare, to call thyself
A god,—a Higher Power thou still wilt feel
To tower above thy ken, beyond all heights
That thou, on winged feet, hast ever trod!

One word before I go, since I have said
So much for that deep wisdom, which each man
May gain from intercourse with Nature's wilds,
From trees and fields, from sun and air and sky;

Yet one word more to qualify the whole.
Believe not what I say, howe'er I may
By happy turn of word or metred line
Perchance give force to it; believe it not,
Unless an answering stir doth rise within
Thy soul, for that is wiser than all books
And words of men!
And this besides, as said
The Man of God, go search the scriptures old.
And not that script alone which Hebrew seers
(More grandly than all else, 'tis true) have writ;
But all the holy books of every land,
The scriptures that arose in hoary time
In farthest east, the cradle of our race,
The Veds sublime, and others older yet!
Within them all thou'lt find a subtle thread
Of semblance, 'midst a mass of symbols strange,
That shows how men, in every clime and age,
When face to face with life's perennial Riddle,
Find rest within the same deep principles.
Go read them when thou may'st, and carry them
To Nature's heart for test of truthfulness,
For She, a wax impression of the truth
As God has fashioned it, can never lie.
The spirit elements, that clime and race
Have welded into mind and human force,
Determine all the symbols of the thought
That flows from out that race; and so it is,
That 'twixt these scriptures old a difference
Exists, which ne'ertheless is one of face
And surface only; and I often think
That all our differences are such as lie
As shallow and as light, at last, as these;

At least 'tis so when from the heart of hearts
We strive to clothe with words our deep convictions.
We fight on phantom fields for phantom cause,
And oft mistake for foe a friendly heart.
For truth doth light all hearts, and truth is one,
And all our warring difference, perchance,
Is never more than difference of terms.

Conclusion

The men of ancient time in southern land
Did symbol forth the beauty of the field,
And of the truths that are in Nature found,
In the conception of a land of rest
For souls, beyond the bar of time, and called
The land Arcadia, where the souls of men
At will could roam through sunny fields of flowers,
Where Nature was intensified in wealth,
And earth's most beauteous paradise of vale
And wooded hill was seen all glorified.
Here all the flowers could talk and speech was found
In bird and beast and fish and insect small,
Alike in leafy tree and waving corn;
And man with all the forms of Nature wild
Communion held, while friendship's jewelled chain
Enlinked him to the animal and tree,
Whose origin he shares, with diverse power.
Here too all men and women ever dwelt
In purest amity; nor evil thought,
Nor avarice knew, for coin's base, perjured face
Ne'er entered there, vile discord to conceive.
Nor yet was lying word e'er uttered, where

The Truth from all sides spoke from leaf and sod.
Arcadia, Heaven, is here, in Time and Space;
E'en now we may begin this land to find
Which deep within us lies; and which when found
Creates anew to semblance of its own
Fair beauty, all the world of sense without.
Out in the woodland wild the truth is found,
And spirit voices speak to listening ear
Through every living form. Naught but the truth
We still may hear, translatable to mind
In Nature immanent. If thou hast doubts
To clear, or some hard problem of the soul
To solve; or question facts thou hast of book
Or teacher heard, and doubt if they be true;
Ask not another's thought to set thy doubts
At rest, but come to Nature's solitudes,
And wrestle there, till thou wring out the truth
From semblances and cast the dross aside!
Ah! men may call him wise who learning great
Has gathered from without, by rote from books,
Whose brain is crammed with facts and figures dry;
He only 's truly wise, who from within
Has gleaned his store, whose mind with wisdom brims,
Distilled of silence falling pearl by pearl
Down from the infinite within his soul;
Who hath from Nature oft seen mirrored back
The high divinity within him set,
And moulds his acts according. Call him wise
Who knows enough to know he nothing knows
Save what within his soul the Spirit speaks.
Ever the truth a liberator is,
And I,—if I may win some faintest word
From that pure source to draw and utter forth,

Would cut the thought of men adrift and free
Of all false props and visions of the truth
Acquired of other men, would set them free
And strong in their own self-found, soul-wrought way
To serve their God; and from the vast within,
That ocean boundless, which in every man
Its own deep tides and motions doth control,
Their own redemption win and truth to see,
Which never yet in one set way or form
Was seen of any twain nor e'er can be.
The blind of old did ask the Man Divine,
Who highest word of God the world has heard
Did teach, "From whence hast thou authority?"
And I—who here have aimed in my poor way
At truth,—if I be asked to tell the source
Of that I speak, not to some written word
In page or book compiled of brother man
Will point; but to that wondrous canvas stretched
Wide o'er the universe, where he who runs
May read.
Envapoured in the morning's dew
Or hymned in praise of bird or singing breeze,
Voiced of the silent stars, in boundless space,
Alike in every fact or thought or sense,
The Spirit dwells and highest truth is seen.
But chief to me have come these thoughts sublime
Which wrap the soul in flame of ecstasy,
And are themselves their own authority,
While silent I have walked beneath the trees,
The whispering, sun-kissed, thought-clad, God-built
trees.
And when I shall have passed the barrier dark,
And am no longer seen of mortal eye,

If one there be who doth my memory keep,
And fain would hear, but for one moment's span,
The voice now silent,—come beneath the trees,
Thou'lt find my spirit there—beneath the trees.

To the Trees

NAY, nay, sweet sharers of my solitude,
Ye trees in bowery concourse all astir!
I pray you cease your clamorous appeal,
To claim mine ear in some less urgent hour.
I come to-day, my mind a teeming womb
Of vague yet passionate thoughts, all ripe for birth,
Of no near kin to you, whom now I seek,
That in your peaceful groves I may with toil
Bring to the birth these struggling themes of mine.
Yet having come I find no peace but hear
On every hand whisperings importunate.
A wider theme it was that drove me forth,
Hot with impatient powers, to leave my kind
And find with you silence and solitude.
O, tell me why these boons are me denied.
Have ye so soon forgotten that long lay
That late I sang, urged on by your appeal;
And do ye press me yet, unsatisfied?
Indeed, then must I yield, confessing so
The power of beauty o'er the poet's mind,
Nor will I seek (I know 'twere all in vain)
To find in fathomless seas of agent cause
The germ and kernel of your forceful call.
I do but know, and this doth all suffice,
That beauty like a robe divinely spun
Enwraps you round; that oft the laughing sun
Sports with elusive shades within your leaves,
Making their bright forms dance a golden dance

Of purest ecstasy, that leaps and flies
And catches up my spirit till it sings,
And singing finds an infinite repose.

Full oft I wonder if in space remote,
Among the myriad stars afire by night,
Whirled by their might upon its circling race,
Perchance there be a world with hill and dale,
Field, stream and hedgerow, flowers and trees
The half as fair as these; for must we deem
That He who fashioned here such beauteous forms
Might also weave as fair or e'en more fair
In other worlds. Yet if He so doth weave,
Methinks I could not dare to dwell therein;
Scarce could I bear delights surpassing these.
O beauteous shapes, O miracles of art,
O blissful, restful paths and dingled glades,
If, when I die, my spirit shall remain
Or roam, at times, the world that gave it form,
Truly within such scenes shall be my home;
That from your drooping branches fresh and sweet,
And from your beckoning arms inviting rest
I may exhale a presence and a peace
And shower upon all lovers of your shade
Sweet intimations of the heavenly joys
And kisses of delight.

War

I WANDERED in a pleasant wood
In happy yet in pensive mood,
What time young April's merry cry
Brings back the swallow to our sky.
A gentle comrade at my side
With converse checked the pensive tide,
And o'er its stress contrived to fling
The tender span of friendship's wing.
Around our feet a dancing band
Of bluebells spread a sapphire strand,
Through which the playful breezes swept
And bees from bell to bonnet leapt.
Above our heads a merry throng,
The oak and alder boughs among,
Shed sweetest showers of April song.
There was no cloud within the blue;
All things took on a joyful hue;
There came no sound from heaven or earth
To mar the pageant of rebirth
Till War burst in upon our way
And with reiterate raucous bray
Shattered the sanctity of day.
For ever and anon the thud
Of booming cannon checked the blood,
And clarion notes of hate's disease
Awoke wild echoes from the trees,
Who thrust away in hot rebound
The dread, accurs'd and hateful sound.
Not that our England lay that day

To foreign foe an open prey,
But merely that in mimic fray,
Hired echoes of the nation's will,
Mind-sick with War's hypnotic thrill,
On bugle brayed th' ironic bar—
"In times of peace prepare for war."
So in the woods and o'er the plain
There lurked a hidden scarlet stain,
Where all had else been heaven that day
And joy held undisputed sway.
To Nature's mood and reverent tone
Through keys of speech we tuned our own;
And often pausing in our walk
To suit the measure of our talk,
We drifted far from common things
To speak of those deep questionings
That rise like ripples in the soul,
Yet seldom last until they reach
Their ruby port and onward roll
To break upon the shore of speech.
For yoked to our conspiring thought,
Our youth and fair surroundings brought
Unprompted themes whose mood inclin'd
To task the highest powers of mind,
And bore us in enchanted car
Away from sorry thoughts of war.
Yet ever as sweet friendship lent
Its leaves of silence and content,
The rifle's crack and clarion's blare
Cast o'er our minds a random snare
To catch our thought and tie it down
To themes as sordid as their own.

* * * * *

The Thought-clad Trees

THOUGHT-CLAD? Ah yes, but now all stript and bare
Naked they stand, moaning, disconsolate.
Strewn on the ground the leaves lie everywhere,
Sere and inanimate.

Musing I tread the carpeted decay,
The tattered robes of glory now departed,
Pondering how I am reft and bare as they
And all as empty hearted.

Each leaf I spurn was once a ripen'd thought,
That burgeon'd through the bud to leafy shading;
In warmth and life the miracle was wrought
In forms that now are fading.

While summer sang, I too could sing and see
On every hand the sign of Love's announcement;
And from the deeps of Truth's immensity
Could image its pronouncement.

Where are those thoughts that forced my lips to song,
Clothing their rapt appeal in rhythmic shrouding?
Pressed in the mire or whirl'd by wind along
Beneath the wintry clouding.

The winter of the heart; what obdurate spell
Drives forth to naked wastes the soul still thirsting,
E'er scarce the lips have sipped at Truth's pure well,
And still are parched and bursting?

How brief the hour in which we rise and soar!
How fleet the vision of pervading gladness!
Oh life, how soon thy flood-tide leaves the shore
And bares the sands of sadness!

"Let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness"

SPIRIT of Power and Beauty! Lo, I burn,
I am consumed by fire unquenchable,
I melt, I pass, the substance of my life
Becomes diffuse and fluid with a love
And reverence unspeakably sublime!
Oh, give me words to utter that I feel,
Deliver me, o'erburden'd with my thought,
And let me win by utterance to release
The bursting tide of worship that I feel
Upsurging from within.
I long to tell
The glories of that temple thou dost build,
That shrine of alabaster all a-thrill
With pulse of sapphire rivulets and streams
That walks the earth a miracle of life,
Stamped with the glory of the Infinite;
That palace of delight, that holiest shrine,
So gloriously human, yet divine,
That form of forms, that acme of Thine art,
That apex of the scheme, that crown of earth,
The confluent stream of all that did precede,
And that contains the fruit of every seed
That ever rose to ripeness on the earth,
All weft and woven to a melody
Of music all divine—the human form.

What words can aid my stiff and stumbling thought
To speak of this Thy marvel of design,
The which as oft I meet in child or youth,
In budding maidenhood or ripened prime,
Begirt with innate majesty and grace,
A speaking rhapsody of flowing lines,
I long to kneel and 'fore the creature art
To worship Thee—the Craftsman uncreate.

"The Debt Immense"

I

HUMANITY! Oh, let me be thy slave,
It were no bondage to remit the loan
Of whatsoe'er of talent I have shown,
For every whit I hold thy toiling gave.
My brothers! We are rushing to the grave,
A little while, and you and I shall own
Naught but our virtues and the love we've sown;
Since what we give, 'tis that alone we save.
I have a talent—let me spend its worth
In love for you—ye toilers of the earth!
Paid beyond measure if my songs but wake
A thrill of pleasure in the hearts that ache.
I care not whose the house I halt before,
Tho' it would glad me most to ope the cottage door.

II

If I have leisure to engraft a store
Of wisdom's treasures delved from out the past,
My ease remains but while thy labours last,
And human effort forged all ancient lore.
Thou dost thy work; we give the scrap of ore,
And deem that so we make the bargain fast;
We need thy ware, tho' little 'tis thou hast,
We pay a price, yet do not clear the score.

For who shall set a value on or tell
All that thou lackest, where thou shouldst excel?
Within thy mind who stays to cast a flower,
To wake thy soul to beauty's priceless dower?
How shall we pay thee for these boons denied
Which we may build at will with tools by thee supplied?

III

Inadequate my powers, yet I hope
To win with love where'er my skill may fail;
For tho' my arrowed thought may not impale
Its purposed mark, ill-feathered with a trope,
And tho' my bow of verse may fail to cope
With winds of error that the task assail,
I yet may urge some abler bard prevail
To ends of truth, where I but blindly grope.
There is no need for love to speak at all;
It is, itself, a force that can instal
Its naked purpose on the throne of fact,
Nor wait dependent on some agent act.
I do not need assurances—I know—
No seed that's sown of love can ever fail to grow.

IV

We all are poets eloquent to pour
The soul's impassioned music on the air,
When, in the cause of right, for love we bear
Arms militant, as did the seers of yore;
Arms fashioned not of fire and earthly ore,
But welded by a flame for ends more fair,
That love and sweet compassion bid us wear,
When the soul's promptings stir us to the core.

For then the spirit, leaping o'er all bound,
Reveals its beauty through the power of sound;
Recks not of custom, heeds not time or place,
Lives in the eternal for a fleeting space,
And drawing thence a flood of symbols new,
Restores all forms to likeness of the good and true.

V

Oh Source of Light Immortal, let me keep
Undimmed the goal to which I do aspire!
I would not be a wastrel of thy fire,
Feeding my heart on mummeries of sleep.
I cannot toil just coin on coin to heap;
This is to me to let my soul on hire.
One end alone can sate my full desire—
Facts from the field of heavenly truth to reap.
Thou know'st my heart—I do not seek renown,
I seek thy Truth, believing that 'tis shown
Thro' Nature and the common facts of life.
To think that thou with Reason art at strife
Staggers and daunts me, till all blind and dumb,
My soul falls fainting to the earth, inert and numb.

Two Women

I

WOMAN, superbly human, yet divine!
Robed in the glory of thy loveliness,
Thy beauty pains me with its chaste excess,
Making my senses reel as tho' with wine;
Thy heart I know not, yet thy form doth sign
A warrant for the truth I would express;
A great Idea through human toil doth press,
Till all things tally with Its vast design.
Thou poem of form! Thou sculptured melody!
Thou earthly joy and heavenly prophecy!
The centuries have toiled to build thy grace,
And limn their lofty promise in thy face!
Thou jewel of culture, gem supremely rare
In Earth's proud diadem, pre-eminently fair!

II

Poor little drudge, cast in a humbler mould,
Slattern and graceless, mazed with changeless toil!
Who bade thee be to thoughtless ease a foil,
Selling thy birthright for a mite of gold?
Not that thy labour brands thee, for I hold
All work is worship; but I would uncoil
The bands of ignorance, and enrich the soil
Wherein thy mind grows stunted, nerveless, cold.
Tho' poets sing for thee and minstrels play,
Lo! thou art heedless of their joyful lay.
A thousand facts of beauty round thee lie;
Thou seest them not and sadly passest by.
A heaven of gladness waits within thy mind,
Couldst thou but enter there and leave the world behind.

Class

PREACHER, you take your text and preach in vain.
How shall that love of God for which you plead
Take root in man whilst pride of place and greed
Have cleft love's human sanctuary in twain?
Much better it were to strive to close again
These gaps in life's fair garden, that the seed
Of social reverence might grow up to feed
That higher reverence which you seek to train.
But ye, the keepers of our social health,
Who should be first to bid the virus stay,
Yourselves, save for a few, have fallen prey
Unto that subtle ill that comes by stealth.
Ye have given terms to Class, love's first decay,
And made unholy truce with War and Wealth.

To Emerson

TRUE poet-priest! 'Twould seem as if the bound
'Twixt heaven and man in thee were overstept,
That in thy soul all meaner passions slept,
So that heaven's beam came through thee pure and found
Nothing to stint or mar its perfect round.
This dowered thy soaring mind with wings that swept
Instant to truth, which being embraced was kept
And clothed by thee in words of deathless sound.
Rich was the seed that thou on Earth didst sow;
Immortal spirit! Already earth is free
Of many spectres that thou didst outbrave
And blooms the fairer for it; so that thou
May'st well look back from where thou art and see
Eternal blossoms springing from thy grave.

"On Two Shells cast up by the Tide"

WOMAN, how could'st thou, dower'd with such a face
As might have made base men bow down in awe
And bound them constant unto virtue's law,
So give the lie to all thine outward grace?
How could'st thou traffic with thy love and trace
The paths of shame until the hidden flaw
Had widen'd to a pit, whose whirlpool-draw
Gulfed thee at last in murderous embrace?
And thou, vile victim of thine own excess,
How could'st thou add thy strength to bait the snare
Already far too strong, for one so fair,
Tho' frail and false to all true loveliness?
But thou hast paid the price, and she, O God!
Must soon, like thee, lie rotting in the sod.

Life

LIFE is for ever life. Saw you last night
With what surpassing splendour sank the sun;
How when the east announced that day was done,
Still from the west soft fan-shaped bows of light
Shot up whole quiversful of arrows bright;
As tho' day's star, now that his rest was won,
Spurned it away with untired pinion
And turned new flushed with power for further flight?
Such is our life; beyond death's fleeting sting,
We still pursue our heaven-appointed quest.
For like the night, death is a shadow thing
Cast by excess of life; its seeming rest
Shall find us, when it comes, with untired wing
And hope still uppermost within our breast.

Reverence

OH thou who from the past's hypnotic glare
And bonds of custom's bias art set free,
Whose adult thought, soaring in liberty,
Searches for Truth that forms not, oh, take care
Lest thy full manhood, lifted now to tear
The veiling forms from off Truth's purity,
Waxing o'erbold its inmost soul to see,
Snatch reverence last of all, to see Truth bare.
For with the grip that takes in pride the boon
That Love for love alloweth, thou shalt race
Down from the vision headlong in a swoon
Of coldly mirror'd half-truth, doom'd to trace
Around its glory like a sickly moon
A deadly orbit with averted face.

Jahveh

I STOOD with Moses in the ancient time
And with him step by step the mount did climb;
And through his eyes survey'd that mystic sight,
The Bush afire with the Primeval Light;
And when I had caught up my swooning mind,
Screening my eyes that screenless had been blind,
And summon'd whiten'd lip and shrunken tongue
To ask whence such a miracle was sprung,
A fiery formless vapour leapt around
And melted on the senses into sound.

I AM the wonder that doth here appear;
I am the seen, the seeing and the seer.
My all and little in the world I cram,
Yet to all asking answer but I AM.
To every why within the seeking mind
I fling a cause to doubly blind the blind.
Who nighest know Me as I am ask not
To find an end unto an endless knot.
Thine eyes are partial, partial yet of me,
Too partial yet to hold infinity.
Yet in thy mind I throne Myself in small
That what thou hast of Me may image all.
Seekest thou more, then hither must thou push
And stand with Me *within* the burning bush.

The vision passed and as I woke to fling
The net of memory o'er the wingéd thing

And through the mesh of introspective wit
To draw the sense and weave a form to it,
I fell again into a sphere less high
And heard a whisper on the wind go by.

The bush that burns yet passes not away
Is the bush of Form upbuilt of word or clay,
The temporal hiding of the Eternal Word,
That ever speaketh, yet is never heard;
Unknown apart from form yet never found
Or seen of eye or heard of ear in sound;
For Truth is sped as soon as it is spoken,
And written truth of Truth is but the token;
And forms are shroudings which by time's keen rust
Grow old, decay and crumble into dust.
There is a fountain of Eternal Youth;
Love is that fountain and to drink is Truth.

Prayer

I CREPT to Him and craved Him abjectly
To loose my bonds and snap my slavery.
I still did wrong.
I stood upright and through Him boldly sought
My birthright's strength to match my deed to thought.
Straight from me fell
The chains of hell
And forthwith I was strong.

The Awakening

OH Lord, mend Thou my ways;
Convert me to the right;
Thus cried I through the night:
Oh Lord, mend Thou my ways.

And when the morn was come,
Still to high heaven I cried:
Oh let grace be supplied,
Turn Thou my footsteps home.

And 'twixt the labours of the day
I still continued thus to pray:
Oh Source of Virtue, Source of Light,
Plant Thou me steadfast in the Right.

Then suddenly, and while I seared my soul
With agonised desire,
Born of remorse's fire,
Over my prostrate spirit stole
Authoritative voice that seem'd my own,
And yet far mightier, vast—its tone
Transform'd to power and resolute control:

Arise! Why grovel at My feet, my child?
Thou son by heavenly right,
Assume thy strength as such. I am reviled
By prayer that sinks to beggary; as a blight
It lights upon My love,
Who all below—above
Have made and fill'd with innate force and might.

What would'st thou? That I forced thy wayward will?
Compell'd thee to the good and from the ill?
Thou art no toy, of alien substance built,
To please with homage or enrage by guilt.

Thou art My son, begirt with Mine own power.
Why dost thou fear to claim thy heavenly dower?
Thine own free act, self-will'd, of inborn strength
Alone can give thee peace and lead, at length,
To that for which I fashioned thee, My son;
Thyself must crown the work by Me begun.

Good Friday

TELL me, thou Spirit of the woodland dear,
Do I do wrong to linger here?
What thinkest thou, should I go borrow
The threadbare crape of an ancient sorrow,
To-day, when from out the peerless blue,
The sun laughs loud till the earth laughs too,
And all the air is a pæan of gladness?
Tell me, why herd my fellows in sadness,
Conjuring up the cankering guest
Of gloom unasking into their breast?
Will it please the Power who has given to-day
The mantle of joy, if I throw it away?
If I turn from the cup His love has inspired
To drink the water my feet have mired,
Refusing the joy that even the birds
Are doing their best to put into words?
Must I leave the song of gladness behind
Whose note the wind is trying to find,
And flee from the light that sets the daisies
All wide agape with rapturous praises,
And lifts the lark from the earth away
On the breast of the cloud to the lip of the day
To steal the sun's first kiss, and capture
The swooning notes of the heavenly rapture
And madly drench the quivering air
From heights that love has led him to dare?
Tell me, ye trees, so old and wise,
Do ye, when the sap begins to rise,

Cling to the thought of your late decay,
Spurning the joyful present away;
Or do ye leap to the pulsing tide,
Flinging receptive senses wide,
Gazing wide-eyed to the zenith's dome
Whence the awakening forces come?

Tell me, O Spirit of Nature, tell me
Who thus with joy dost trance and spell me,
Do I, in drinking the morning glory,
Shame thereby the sacred story?
Wouldst Thou have me to shun and fly
Thy universal charity?
Lift me, Spirit of the woodland dear,
Lift me heavenward, fill me, here,
Beneath the open dome of blue,
Fill me, drench me through and through
With the pure sacramental wine
Of Beauty recognised as Thine
And worship'd humbly as divine,
Divine and wholly upbuilt of Thee,
Thou core of all Divinity.

Nature

I

OH Nature, thou bright reflex of the soul!
When pierced the veil of semblance o'er thy face,
And focussed all thy beams through time and space,
How swiftly dost thou ray me back the Whole!
How surely thy deep verities console
My way-worn spirit and my cares erase!
How gently all my sorrows dost thou chase,
And of a loving mother take the rôle!
Oft will I win me to thy tender breast
To seek the solace of thy soft embrace;
And thou shalt be my monitor and test,
When newer light the older would displace.
Of all life's joys, for me it shall be best
To hearken to thy song and be at rest.

II

Who listens oft to Nature's simple tune
And finds within an outlet for his need
To worship at Truth's throne, apart from creed,
Who learns aright to read the mystic rune,
O'er myriad facets of the Cosmos hewn,
And sees that good lurks e'en within the weed,
Since *all* life's facts one final purpose feed,
Has reaped from life its long pre-destined boon.

If constant to the message he has found
And to that deeper Word unborn of sound,
If conscious of the real and stable bond
That binds this partial life to that beyond,
His soul has reached the summit of the plan
That orbed the worlds from thought, and fashioned Man.

The Request

THOU muse who art my dower,
Why dost thou fill my every tuneful hour
With ethic preaching?
Why must I always wear
The priestly robe, and voice the hymnal air,
Who oft would sing
Light as a lark on wing
The joys that spring from earth to heaven up-reaching.

I would lie wildly prone
On the earth's green bosom that is yet heaven's throne,
An earth-child's crooning,
Flinging my joys to the skies,
Till that deep blue bring blindness to my eyes;
I'd voice the flowers
And fill the sunny hours
Full to the brim with joy in rapture swooning.

Yet when my spirit sings,
It seems one comes and o'er my shoulder flings
The seer's mantle;
And when I would indite
Some choric song for treble voices light,
I hear truth's thunder roll
And fill up all my scroll
With sombre chords deep plunged in bassic knell.

Spirit! whose interplay
Gives soul and substance to my every lay,
Think not I ask
Release from that which is both boon and task—
Yet let me sometimes float
On streams less deep, and throat
The joy this earth-world renders
And all that it engenders
Of melody and beauty;
Lest they who con my pages
Deem me one of those bloodless sages
All run to seed and rooty,
Who tho' they reap the kisses
Of spiritual joys and other-worldly blisses
Yet fling their souls afar
Seeking some happier star
And know not what the happiness of this is.

Complaint

IS there then in the simple earthly joys,
The social human mood,
Aught that destroys
Or closes at its source
The stream-like force
That to the poet is both wine and food?

That through the madding drone of days and weeks,
No rapture thralls my mind
Or flames my cheeks;
No heaven-dews caught in sips
Melt on my lips,
Leaving sweet residue of song behind.

That to the surcharged bill old Time doth bring,
And with a scornful heat
Before me fling,
I can from the mind's purse
No tithe disburse
To reap the solace of the heart's receipt.

Doth He who gives to individual hearts
Each its allotted pleasure,
When He imparts
The joy that seemly springs
From earth-born things,
Withdraw and hide the wholly spiritual treasure?

Is't thus with joys, or is it that the poet,
Most prone to the heart's feeling,
Must yet forego it,
Or if he would aspire
To visions higher,
Must strip his soul and sip its waters kneeling?

Is prophecy so cold, so spiritually dear,
That lone, companionless,
Must be the seer;
Comes but its passionate mood
In solitude;
Is Truth ne'er heard save in the wilderness?

To Anyone

IF thou wouldst be my friend and share my thought,
Come dream with me love's yet despised dreams.
Leave thou that maelstrom pit where all are mad,
Deeming *that* gain that unto love is naught.
Come forth with me into that other world
Where breathe the souls who crave no other worth
Than the pure gem of Truth that Beauty hides
Within the rock of Strength.

If thou wouldst be my friend, then fight my foes—
Pale mumbling Cant and formalistic Code.
All mummery that aims thro' empty shows
To give a seeming life to hollow death,
And call respect on that which is accursed—
The base assumption of the meed that flows
But rightly unto God.
All caste and class, those wholly rotten stays
Whereby men strive to keep the worthy down
And prop the social edifice awry,
Rearing on soil of privilege and ease
The bitter-fruited weed of arrogance,
A social parasite.

If thou wouldst be my friend, then love my loves,
Who am in love with life where'er its spring
Wells forth untainted from its primal core,
The morn's beatitude, whether it be

The actual timely boon or symbolled in
The child, pure foam-flake from the fount of love
As yet unsullied at the fountain's rim;
And all young truth that forth from embered faith
Wings heavenward phœnix-born.

If thou wouldst be my friend, this hardest boon
I crave, the jewel of unuttered love.
Give me not words, mere lumber of the mind,
Nor sympathy, nor praise, the salve of babes.
But to the spirit that I would express,
Tho' failing often, yield thine utmost faith.
Nay, love me not save for the goal within
To which I struggle.

Water, Water, Everywhere

Water, water, everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.
"The Ancient Mariner."

SOME shells for ever on the seashore clink,
Howe'er they try
Within the ocean's bosom deep to sink
And peaceful lie.

Some stones are hewn to fit the round well's brink
For ever dry;
Some eyes but giv'n to press against a chink
Of heaven—and pry.

God builds some minds to dwell alone, I think,
Yet wonder why;
And why to such as these a heart to link,
Of thirst to die.

" But that so oft she comes "

BUT that so oft she comes to me in dreams
And stirs me as of yore with love's sweet pain
Scarce could I ever trust a heart again
So far estranged from constancy as seems
This heart of mine, that given to countless themes
A beauteous world supplies, doth scarce retain
In well-filled hours a vestige of the blain
That once for love it bore. But night redeems
All constancy's cold censures with the bliss
The inconstant cannot know, and which to reap,
Albeit on night's dim fields, assures me this—
That, though time heals, and new-found joys are deep,
The hurt, a busy brain may well dismiss,
Lies deeper, and reveals itself in sleep.

To a Friend

THE Sun obeisance now has made
As day's departing guest,
His afterglow begins to fade
And dwindle in the west.
Upon the light's fast ebbing tides
The star of eve serenely rides
At anchorage—at rest.

Youth's ardent hopes have passed away
Nor would I them renew.
The heat of noon has cooled its ray
To calmer joys and true.
Upon this calm there shines serene
An evening star of silver sheen—
'Tis you, sweet friend, 'tis you.

The Visit

YOU come again, and with your coming, dear,
New life is in me burning.
Beneath the spell that falls when you are near
The summer seems returning.

Can it be winter when the quickening beams
From orbs so softly dawning
Melt all the cloudings of my life, as dreams
Fade at the flush of morning?

Can it be winter where the heavenly flower
Of friendship's rose is blowing,
And fed by many a converse-laden hour
Perennially is growing?

Sweet echoes of the Spring around me play,
Its joys I do remember;
I hear again the melody of May,
Altho' 'tis chill December.

Friendship

AS turning from some orb of blinding might
That balks our vision with its beams intense,
A darkened image lingers on the sense,
And prints its shape where'er our eyes alight;
So haunts me still in oft-recurring sight
Your memory, Friend! my life's one recompense,
To sweetly cheat me with its glad pretence,
And deck with flowers of day my hours of night.
The echo of your voice within me rings,
With cadence as of distant pealing bells.
The semblance of your step beside me sings,
As tho' again we traced these woodland dells.
The music of your converse oft recurs,
And ever into song my spirit stirs.

"Grieve not, dear Friend"

GRIEVE not, dear Friend,
If I should pass whilst thou dost tarry,
Grieve not, nor lend
Thy gentle mind to thoughts that harry!
If thy heart fret
That much I rendered all unbidden,
Beneath the cloak of friendship hidden
Forget! dear heart, forget!

Wrap round my past
No mantle of thy pity's weaving.
My songs were cast
From out no stress with passion heaving.
I was not foiled.
True love finds all its joy in spending;
A love returned is but a lending.
I spun, but never toiled.

The Stars

HOW beautiful are the stars! How calmly they
Watch over man and guide his destinies!
How like the hope for which man's nature sighs,
So far yet steadfast is their tender ray.
Fit nursery for our being's youthful day!
There's not a spot throughout the spanless skies
But ward is kept there by Love's sleepless eyes
And life wings upward on its spiral way.
Much do I love this globe that did me fling
Into life's lap, yet oft, methinks that I
Could yield without regret my latest sigh,
So I be free, on thought's unmeasured wing,
To thread those jewelled gardens of the sky,
And hear the song the eternal star-fires sing.

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